

Personality in Greek Epic, Tragedy, and Philosophy

THE SELF IN DIALOGUE

Christopher Gill

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY PARENTS

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This book was written in its present form at the University of Exeter in 1990–4. But my work on this topic goes back many years, and this book is based on two earlier half-completed attempts to offer a general account of the fascinating but elusive topic of Greek conceptions of personality. My acknowledgements reflect this longer period of work as well as the final preparation of the book.

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The period of research for this book has coincided, for myself and my wife Karen, with the birth and early childhood of our four sons. This fact alone will give some indication of the demands made on Karen in enabling me to continue my efforts in what has sometimes seemed an interminable project. Her loving help in my work and in our shared life with our children have helped crucially to shape the framework of thinking that I have brought to the book. More sadly,

this period has also coincided with the death of my parents, and led me to reflect on how much of my understanding of character and personality is based on their own lives and their care for me and for others. Always supportive and never intrusive, they would have liked to see my work result in a substantial outcome; and I dedicate this book to their memory with love.

C.G.
University of Exeter,
January 1995.

I have taken advantage of this paperback edition to make a number of minor corrections and to bring bibliographical references up to date; the book is otherwise unchanged from the 1996 hardback edition.

NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

All Greek in this book is translated; translations are mine unless otherwise stated; if not otherwise ascribed, they are based on the latest Oxford Classical Text. Greek words or phrases, especially key moral or psychological terms, are transliterated rather than given in Greek script if I think that this may be helpful to those with little or no Greek. Abbreviations for Greek works are normally those listed in Liddell–Scott–Jones, *Greek–English Lexicon*. All secondary works cited are given in full form in the Bibliography. Internal references are normally given in the form, ‘see 5.6 below, text to nn. 277–80’.

CONTENTS

Introduction: Posing the Questions	1
The Topic	1
The Structure of the Book	18
1. Making up Your Mind	29
1.1 Snell and Adkins on the Deciding Self	29
1.2 Homeric Models of Practical Reasoning	41
1.3 Homeric Models of Ethical Motivation: Odysseus’ Monologue	60
1.4 The Other Three Monologues	78
2. Being a Hero	94
2.1 The Problematic Hero	94
2.2 Plato and Aristotle	99
2.3 Late Romantic and Structuralist Approaches	107
2.4 Critical Position Adopted Here	115
2.5 Achilles in <i>Iliad</i> 9: Critical Frameworks	124
2.6 Achilles’ Speech and Sarpedon’s	131
2.7 Achilles’ Argument	136
2.8 Achilles’ Great Speech and Heroism	148
2.9 Euripides’ <i>Medea</i> : The Case for Infanticide	154
3. The Divided Self in Greek Poetry	175
3.1 Preliminaries	175
3.2 Odysseus’ Barking Heart	183
3.3 Achilles’ Swelling Heart	190
3.4 Ajax’s Womanized Speech	204
3.5 Medea’s Self-Mastering Anger	216
3.6 Greek Poetic and Philosophical Models of Self-Division	226
4. The Personality Unified by Reason’s Rule in Plato’s <i>Republic</i>	240
4.1 Preliminaries	240
4.2 What is Reason’s Rule?	245

4.3 The Educational Programme: Irwin's Interpretation	260
4.4 The Educational Programme: The First Stage	266
4.5 The Educational Programme: The Second Stage	275
4.6 Why do the Philosopher-Rulers Re-enter the Cave?	287
4.7 Philosopher-Rulers and Problematic Heroes	307
5. Being Yourself and Meeting the Claims of Others	321
5.1 Preliminaries	321
5.2 Altruism and Self-Realization	326
5.3 Alternative Ethical and Philosophical Models	334
5.4 Aristotelian Friendship and Norms of Interpersonal Ethics	346
5.5 'What each of us is' in NE 9. 4, 8	356
5.6 'What each of us is' in NE 10. 7-8	370
5.7 Post-Reflective Virtue in Other Greek Theories	383
6. Being a Person and Being Human	400
6.1 Preliminaries	400
6.2 Criteria of Personhood (1): Subjectivity	403
6.3 Criteria of Personhood (2): 'Second Order' Psychological Functions	412
6.4 Methodology of Theories of Personhood and Human Nature	423
6.5 Aristotle on Being Human and Divine	430
6.6 Being Responsible for Becoming Fully 'Human'	443
6.7 Conclusion: Models and Project	455
Bibliography	470
Index of Ancient Passages	489
General Index	499

INTRODUCTION

Posing the Questions

THE TOPIC

The project of this book is to consider ancient Greek thinking about personality and selfhood, as presented in Greek epic, tragedy, and philosophy. Such a project could be approached in several different ways. I begin by defining the form it takes here, by contrast with other possible forms. At the same time, I clarify what senses of 'personality' and 'selfhood' are at issue in this book.

The terms 'personality' and 'self', in modern English, are broad, non-technical terms with a range of (partly overlapping) meanings. Three meanings of 'personality' are most relevant here, with which we can associate certain senses of 'self' or 'selfhood'. One is that of individual distinctiveness or uniqueness, expressed either in interpersonal relationships or in psychological character or viewpoint.¹ Another meaning, which may be attached either to the term 'personality' or 'self' is that of psychological structure; this may be either that which is common to us as human beings or distinctive to us as individuals.² Another meaning is that of our essence as 'persons', in a normative sense: in this respect, 'personality' and 'self' are synonyms of 'personal identity' or 'personhood'.³

¹ See e.g. *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) (= *OED*), 'personality', 2a: 'That quality or assemblage of qualities which makes a person what he is, as distinct from other persons: distinctive personal or individual character, esp. when of a marked or notable kind'; see also 3b, 5a, and 'self', senses 3, 4a.

² See e.g. *Chambers Dictionary* (1960), 'personality': '... the integrated organisation of all the psychological, intellectual, emotional, and physical characteristics of an individual, especially as they are presented to other people.' See also *OED*, 'personality', sense 2c, and the combinations, e.g. 'personality structure', listed in 7.

³ See e.g. *OED*, 'self', 3: 'That which in a person is really and intrinsically *he* (in contradiction to what is adventitious); the ego (often identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body); a permanent subject of successive and varying states of consciousness'. See also *OED* 'personality', 1a, 1c, 3a. When 'person' is used in this book in this normative, semi-technical sense, this is signalled by the use of inverted commas, italics, or the noun 'personhood'. See further below 1.1, text to nn. 17-19; 6.1-4.

In the course of this book, I treat features of Greek culture which can be seen as relevant to all three senses of 'personality' and 'self'. For instance, in Chapter 2, I discuss the presentation of certain striking figures in Greek epic and tragedy, who could be described as having a distinctive 'personality' (or 'character') and sense of 'self'. I also examine, especially in Chapters 3 and 4, Greek poetic and philosophical models of psychological structure (and of internal conflict). In Chapter 6, I consider how far we can find in Greek thought an equivalent for the modern ideas of 'personal identity' and 'personhood'; and in Chapter 5 I discuss Aristotle's thinking about our 'true self' (or 'what each of us is'). However, this book is not, and is not designed to be, a systematic or detailed examination of Greek thinking about any *one* of these aspects of the meanings of 'personality' and 'self'.⁴ Rather, I explore interconnections between these three areas of Greek poetic and philosophical thinking, and offer some general account of the picture of the 'person' or 'personality' (in a large and loose sense) that underlies these aspects of Greek thinking. Thus, the book brings together both ethical and psychological questions in Greek poetry and philosophy, and examines the relationship between these. In particular, I am interested in the *norms* of personality and selfhood expressed in these areas of Greek thought, and their relationship to some of the equivalent modern norms. Thus, an alternative title for this book would have been: *Norms of Personality and Selfhood in Greek Poetic and Philosophical Psychology and Ethics*.⁵

These comments explain why the book is presented as being about 'personality' and 'self' in certain aspects of Greek culture. However, to say this is not yet to get to the heart of my concerns. Nor is it to face certain deep conceptual problems raised by the whole project. The terms 'personality' and 'self' are modern English terms with no obvious equivalents in ancient poetic or philosophical Greek. They are also terms which are often associated with certain well-marked features of modern Western thought, notably the placing of a high value on personal individuality and uniqueness.⁶ To say, then, that

⁴ I plan to make a fuller study of ancient conceptions of character structure, esp. in Hellenistic and Roman thought, elsewhere.

⁵ On the significance of the subtitle, *The Self in Dialogue*, see text to nn. 38–45 below.

⁶ See text to n. 1 above. For the idea that modern Western thinking about being a 'person' (and about 'personality', more generally) is permeated by the belief in the importance of unique individuality or selfhood, see Rorty (1976), 11–14; Lukes (1985), 298–300.

one proposes to study personality and selfhood in Greek culture is to raise fundamental questions about the relationship between ancient Greek and modern Western thought. On the one hand, these notions are so central to our thinking that it is virtually inconceivable that they have *no* equivalent in Greek thought. On the other, it is clearly unacceptable to assume that we can transpose our conceptual vocabulary wholesale (with all its implied ideological and meta-physical associations) into the ancient Greek context.⁷ The project requires that we adopt some determinate approach with which to negotiate the relationship between Greek and modern concepts. The choice of approach is crucial, since different approaches carry with them different assumptions about the relationship between Greek and modern Western thinking.⁸

One approach to this project would be to take modern ideas about personality and selfhood as being normative, and to classify ancient Greek ideas as relatively 'primitive' or 'developed' by reference to this norm. This approach is sometimes coupled with the assumption that there is, in Western culture, an in-built historico-cultural process of development towards our modern way of thinking about these concepts. This type of approach is relatively familiar in Classical scholarship; it is most famously exemplified in the work of Bruno Snell and (with some variations) A. W. H. Adkins.⁹

A second approach would be to treat ancient and modern ideas on this subject as part of the nexus of beliefs and practices that make up Greek and modern Western culture, respectively. The central concern in this approach lies in formulating a methodology for analysing the two systems of ideas in a way that does not involve treating either system as primitive or developed, superior or inferior.¹⁰ In Classical scholarship, the most well-developed approach of this type is that of cultural anthropology of a structuralist type, in which concepts are treated as reflecting deep social structures. This approach is sometimes combined with a semiotic one, in which concepts and practices alike are seen as composing a network of

⁷ For some parallel claims about the problem of studying conceptions of personality in other cultures, see Lukes (1985), 297–8; more generally, Carrithers, Collins, and Lukes (1985).

⁸ The importance of this point for the study of Greek psychology and ethics has been emphasized by Williams (1993); see 1.3 below, text to nn. 120–4.

⁹ See 1.1 below.

¹⁰ On the methodological issues involved, see Carrithers, Collins, and Lukes (1985), esp. Collins (1985), Lukes (1985).

significant 'codes' out of which culture is formed. I do not think that these approaches have been applied in a systematic and large-scale way to the topic of Greek thinking about selfhood and personality; but a number of piecemeal studies (together with the general familiarity of these approaches) make it clear what would be involved.¹¹

A third approach would involve combining the exploration of Greek thinking about selfhood and personality with the re-examination of our own ideas on this subject. This approach has been adopted recently by important studies in the philosophy of mind and ethical philosophy. The specific form of this approach that interests me most is that in which, in both areas, a critical appraisal of some of the leading ideas in the modern Western intellectual tradition is combined with a largely positive reappraisal of ancient Greek ideas. The point is not so much that modern ideas are being rejected in favour of ancient ideas. It is rather that, in our current intellectual situation, Greek ideas are treated with a new respect and are seen as freshly relevant to current concerns. Although these studies are not necessarily couched in the form of an enquiry into concepts of selfhood and personality, they carry important implications for the form that such an enquiry should take.¹²

This sketch of possible approaches, while in no way comprehensive,¹³ is adequate for my present purpose, which is to define my own project. It is the third approach which forms the starting-point, and provides the intellectual framework, for this book. I pursue the implications of some existing versions of this approach in the philosophy of mind and ethics, and draw out connections between these issues and a further topic in which I have had a long-standing interest: that of the appropriate way to interpret the characterization of Greek epic and tragic figures.¹⁴ The recent studies which I have in mind combine, in varying degrees, philosophical thought and the re-examination of Greek thinking in the light of current philosophical

¹¹ See e.g. Vernant (1987); Foucault (1988); Goldhill (1990), esp. 100–5. This approach is sometimes characterized as the study of the *mentalité* (roughly 'thought-world') embodied in the forms and practices of a specific society; on this approach in general, see Lloyd (1990).

¹² See text to nn. 20–30 below.

¹³ Another obvious possibility would be a study centred on the history of the 'reception' of Greek conceptions of personality. In fact, there is a good deal about such reception in this book, but treated in connection with a specific set of issues and from a specific intellectual standpoint; see text to nn. 49, 52–4 below.

¹⁴ See Gill (1986), (1987), (1990a and b).

thought. It is the latter project which I pursue here. This is a work of intellectual history, or the history of ideas, not first-order philosophy. It is not the first study to reflect on the significance of these developments in contemporary philosophy for our understanding of certain features of Greek poetic and philosophical thinking.¹⁵ But it is the first one, to my knowledge, which attempts to offer a full-scale study of Greek thinking about selfhood and personality from this standpoint.

My adoption of the third of the approaches described carries with it a rejection of the first approach (the developmental view of Greek thinking) against which the third approach is, in part, a form of reaction. Like some other exponents of the third approach, I point out that the developmental view depends on taking as normative certain conceptions of personality which seem deeply problematic to some contemporary thinkers.¹⁶ On the second approach outlined (the broadly social approach of, for instance, structural anthropology), which also represents a reaction of a different kind against the first approach,¹⁷ I take up no determinate position here. Although I do not adopt any of the methodologies associated with this approach,¹⁸ I share the view that both the Greek and the modern ideas discussed form part of a larger cultural complex of beliefs and practices, and I sometimes draw on ideas developed in scholarship of this type.¹⁹ Also, in proposing to take existing examples of the third approach as my starting-point, I am not saying that I propose to adopt wholesale the philosophical framework of any one exponent of this approach, or the claims made about Greek ideas by any one thinker of this type. Indeed, a significant feature of the book, especially in Chapter 6, is that of questioning some of the claims made about Greek philosophy by such modern thinkers.²⁰ None the less, I regard the third

¹⁵ Important contributions of this type include Nussbaum (1986) and Williams (1993).

¹⁶ See Ch. 1 below; also Williams (1993), esp. chs. 2–3.

¹⁷ On the shift in cultural anthropology from a (broadly) Hegelian, developmental view to a more neutral, structuralist one, see Collins (1985), discussing Durkheim and Mauss.

¹⁸ See further 2.3–4 below on the distinction between the approach adopted here and e.g. the (partly) structuralist approach of Redfield (1975).

¹⁹ e.g. the idea that Homeric, and more generally, Greek, ethical thinking (and practices) are centred on a system of types of reciprocity. See below 2.6, text to n. 127; 4.6, text to nn. 238–42; 5.3, text to n. 78.

²⁰ See 6.5–6 below; also 4.5, text to nn. 157–73. See also text to n. 28 below.

approach as the most promising basis for an exploration of this subject.

I now offer some illustrations of this approach, as applied already to the relationship between Greek and contemporary thinking. In doing so, I underline the relevance of these discussions to the question of conceptions of personality and selfhood.

In the contemporary philosophy of mind, there has been a sustained reaction against the model of the human mind proposed, with enormous influence, by Descartes, according to which mental processes and actions derive from a single source of consciousness, a unitary 'I'. The credibility of this model has been widely questioned; and some of the critics of the Cartesian picture have seen in Greek theories of practical reasoning and motivation (especially Aristotle's) an alternative framework, and one which is free of the problematic Cartesian assumptions. As Kathleen Wilkes (1988) argues, the Cartesian model of mind underlies much modern Western thought about what it is to be a 'person' in the full sense, and to have personal identity. The 'person' has been defined, typically, as a unified locus of self-consciousness, while 'personal identity' has been defined in terms of continuity of consciousness (for instance, continuity of memory) or, relatedly, in terms of an 'I'-centred, or 'first-personal', point of view. Wilkes argues that doubts about the validity of the Cartesian model should lead us to question the utility of defining persons and personal identity in this way. She urges the adoption of a psychological framework which demarcates the psychological coherence, and incoherence, of human and other kinds of being in a way that is not vitiated by Cartesian assumptions. In doing so, she refers to Greek models, especially those of Homer and Aristotle, as pointing the way to an un-Cartesian picture of human and non-human psychological functioning.

Wilkes's criticisms, and those of thinkers of similar views, can be summed up as the claim that the Cartesian and post-Cartesian models of mind and personhood are overly *subjective* and *subjectivist* in two related ways. (1) They give a privileged status to the idea of the 'subject', the 'I' as seat of self-consciousness; and (2) they give a similarly privileged status to the subjective (especially first-personal) perspective in their accounts of our access to, and knowledge of, human psychology. Wilkes and others argue (1) that the mind is best analysed in terms other than that of 'the subject' (for instance, that of the interplay between psychological parts or functions); and (2)

that these functions can be studied and understood best in third-personal (and, ideally, scientific) modes of enquiry. These claims can be described as the demand for a more *objective* (less subject-centred) mode of analysis and for a more *objectivist* account of our knowledge of human psychology.²¹

A line of thought that is analogous in its treatment of the relationship between ancient and modern ideas has been developed in ethical philosophy, especially by Alasdair MacIntyre and Bernard Williams. Both thinkers are critical, on partly similar grounds, of the accounts of moral life and motivation, and of the function of moral theory, offered by Kant and some philosophers after Kant. Their criticisms bear, in different ways, on the role of the individual in moral life, and on the function of general notions, including that of 'person', in moral theory.²² These thinkers are critical of the idea that the moral life is properly understood as grounded in some special kind of stance adopted by the individual agent. A key example of this idea is Kant's thesis that the moral response involves, or implies, an act of 'autonomy', or self-legislation, by which the individual agent binds herself to universal principles. MacIntyre argues that Kant's thesis has analogues, or descendants, in other theories which give a special role to an individual stance, such as that of 'existential' choice or commitment. Both MacIntyre and Williams argue that moral (or rather ethical) life²³ should be understood primarily in terms of the development of dispositions by full-hearted engagement in the value-bearing practices, roles, and modes of relationship of a specific society. These thinkers also criticize the role allocated to ethical theory, and to the use within ethical theory of general notions such as 'person' and 'individual', in much modern philosophy after Kant.

²¹ See Wilkes (1988), esp. ch. 7; see further 1.2 below, text to nn. 38–53. In this book 'subjective' and 'subjectivist', 'objective' and 'objectivist', are sometimes distinguished as indicated in the text. 'Subjective' and 'objective' denote the type of psychological model presupposed (either centred on the 'I' as 'subject' or not); 'subjectivist' and 'objectivist' denote the type of methodology or epistemology presupposed (either giving a special status to subjectivity or not). In this book, the use of the term 'post-' (as in 'post-Cartesian', 'post-Kantian') signifies 'following and influenced by', and not 'following and reacting against' as in the commonly used term 'post-structuralist'.

²² See MacIntyre (1985), esp. chs. 4–5, 9, 12; Williams (1985), esp. chs. 3, 4, 6 (esp. 114–15), 10.

²³ In (1985), ch. 10, Williams uses 'morality' as a term of art to signify the Kantian moral approach, centred on notions such as duty and obligation. Relatedly, proponents of what is sometimes called 'virtue ethics', such as Williams and MacIntyre, prefer to use 'ethics', 'ethical theory', rather than 'morality', 'moral theory', because of the Kantian associations of the latter terms.

They deny that theory, including theory about what it means to be a 'person' or 'rational agent', can play a crucial ('Archimedean') role in grounding ethical life. Such general notions only exert as much leverage in ethical life and argument as they acquire in the life-forms and intellectual tradition of a particular community.

In criticizing ideas of this type, MacIntyre (at least in one version of his thought) and Williams point to Greek thinking, especially that of Aristotle, as representing a valid and alternative mode of understanding ethical life.²⁴ In Aristotle, they find the recognition of the central importance of ethical dispositions, conceived as developing within the roles and practices of a specific community, which they find missing in much philosophy since Kant. On the role of ethical theory, they acknowledge that Aristotle, as well as other Greek thinkers, sees the idea of human nature as, in some sense, grounding ethical life in a way that (in their view) we cannot now find credible. But they point out that Aristotle does not suppose that such intellectual grounding can be ethically effective without the foundation of ethical dispositions and an ethical community. In this respect, his use of this idea differs from that of certain modern uses of notions such as 'individual' or 'person', and does so in a way that seems to them more philosophically defensible.²⁵

This line of thought can be summed up as the claim that the Kantian and post-Kantian approaches are overly individual-centred or *individualist*, both in the picture offered of the ethical life and of the role of ethical theory. MacIntyre and Williams argue for an approach which gives a more central role to engagement or *participation* in interpersonal and communal relationships both in ethical life and in the formation of ethical ideals and theories.

These two lines of criticism (in the philosophy of mind and in ethics) are clearly distinct, and so are the theories being criticized. But it is possible to see points of interconnection between the two

²⁴ MacIntyre (1985), esp. chs. 9, 12, 14, and 18; Williams (1985), ch. 3. MacIntyre (1988) stresses rather the thought that Aristotelian ethical philosophy forms part of a distinct intellectual tradition which constitutes one (but only one) of the strands underlying modern thinking about ethics and rationality. Annas (1993), 4–7, also underlines the differences between Greek ethical thought and much modern moral theory, but does not couple this with a critique of the distinctively modern types of moral theory.

²⁵ See MacIntyre (1985), ch. 12, esp. 147–150, ch. 14, esp. 196–203; Williams (1985), ch. 3, esp. 39–40, 43–4, 51–3. See further below 1.3, text to nn. 110–16; 6.4, text to nn. 85–90; 6.5, esp. text to n. 92.

strands of modern thinking which are the objects of criticism. In so far as they overlap, the theories can be described as expressing a *subjective-individualist* conception of personality. Thus, in some post-Cartesian philosophy, the person is conceived as an 'individual' in the sense of being the centre of a unique, subjective (first-personal) perspective, and this type of individuality is seen as constitutive of personal identity. For Kant himself, the idea of the autonomy (self-legislation) of the person as (individual) moral agent is coupled with a stress on the universality of the moral principles thus legislated. However, some subsequent thinkers, such as Nietzsche or Sartre, conceive the autonomy of the individual agent in markedly subjective (and subjectivist) terms. Only the individual herself²⁶ (the possessor of a uniquely subjective viewpoint) can determine the validity of the rules that she legislates for herself.²⁷

As indicated, contemporary writers such as Wilkes, in the philosophy of mind, and MacIntyre and Williams, in ethics, sometimes present ancient Greek thinking as anticipating, in certain key respects, the approaches to psychology and ethics which they advocate. This is the line of thought that I pursue here, though this is not to say that I proceed to *identify* Greek thinking with these modern approaches. (Indeed, one difference that needs to be underlined, as it is by the modern thinkers themselves, is that Greek philosophers typically hold a more 'objectivist' ethical position than Williams or MacIntyre do, and give a more independent role to reflection or theory in ethical life.)²⁸ My key underlying thought is that, if we are to understand ancient Greek thinking on (what we call) 'personality' and 'selfhood', we need to counteract the

²⁶ I use she/he and her/him indifferently as indefinite personal pronouns, even when summarizing authors (ancient or modern) who use only masculine forms for this purpose. When translating ancient authors, I retain their practice of using masculine forms for this purpose. For similar conventions, see e.g. Irwin (1988), Annas (1993), and, on the issues raised by such conventions, see Nussbaum (1986), note on pp. 3–4.

²⁷ See Kerner (1990), 132–48, and Hill (1989), 92–101, who discuss the differences between Kant's conception of autonomy and Sartre's. The idea that Kant plays a crucial role in paving the way for subsequent, and more 'subjective-individualist', conceptions of the person is suggested by Collins (1985), 52–62, and is fundamental to the argument of MacIntyre (1985), esp. chs. 4–5, taken with ch. 9. See further 2.5 below, text to nn. 100–9, and Ch. 2, nn. 45 and 105.

²⁸ See below 4.5, text to nn. 162–72; 6.5, esp. text to nn. 91–100. This point is also underlined, as far as Williams is concerned, by Engberg-Pedersen (1990a), 112–17, 127–9.

subjective, individualist, and subjective-individualist strands of thought which have played such a large role in shaping modern thinking about these notions, and to frame a more 'objective-participant' account of them.²⁹

Accordingly, much of the discussion of this book is concerned to identify ways in which the influence of Cartesian and post-Cartesian, or Kantian and post-Kantian, thinking about the person has led scholars to offer (what I see as) a misleading account of Greek psychology and ethics. At the same time, I seek to bring out the *objective* (non-subject-centred) character of Greek psychological models, and the *objectivist* character of their thinking about our knowledge of human psychology. I seek also to bring out the way in which Greek ethical thinking stresses the primary role of *participation* in interpersonal and communal relationships both at the practical and the theoretical level. I stress also the way in which one or both of these types of participation are seen as prerequisites for the acquisition of *objective* ethical knowledge. Sometimes, in this book, the two main areas treated (that of psychology and that of ethics) are taken separately. However, I aim also to show how, in Greek poetic and philosophical thought, these two areas are closely interconnected; and how both of them display the kind of thinking about the person that I am calling *objective-participant*.³⁰

To give some more precise indication of what I mean by this latter suggestion, I offer, in summary form, some leading features of the objective-participant conception of person, together with a contrasting set of modern ideas. The objective-participant themes have been framed with Greek thinking in mind, though some of the points included also correspond with relevant features of modern psychological or ethical thinking. The contrasting set of purely modern themes is labelled 'subjective-individualist' for convenience, though it includes ideas of the type I have been calling 'subjective' and 'sub-

²⁹ On the pervasive presence of these strands of thought in modern thinking about personality, see refs. in n. 6 above; also 2.5 below, text to nn. 100–9. On subjectivism, a key point of contrast between Greek and modern thinking is drawn by Burnyeat (1982), on which see 6.2, below, text to nn. 27–30.

³⁰ On the distinction between 'objective' and 'objectivist' (also 'subjective' and 'subjectivist'), see n. 21 above. The terms 'objective-participant' and 'subjective-individualist', when used to signify overall conceptions of person, may be taken to include both aspects (e.g. an 'objective' psychological model and 'objectivism' as regards knowledge and standards); but, when it is important to mark the distinction, this is done in the way explained in n. 21.

jectivist' and 'individualist', as well as 'subjective-individualist'. Thus, it corresponds to no one thinker's set of ideas, though all of them constitute familiar modern themes.³¹ Assembling these points serves to underline my overall aim of charting a broad pattern of thinking about the person in Greek, as in modern, psychology and ethics. The juxtaposition of the two sets of themes brings out the point that we can discern analogous but contrasting structures of thinking about the person in different cultures (or, in our own age, within the same culture).³²

The subjective-individualist conception:

1. To be a 'person' is to be conscious of oneself as an 'I', a unified locus of thought and will.
2. To be a 'person' is to be capable of grounding one's moral life by a specially individual stance (for instance, that of 'autonomy', in one of the possible senses of this term). To treat others as 'persons' is to treat others as autonomous in the same sense.
3. To be a 'person' is to be capable of the kind of disinterested moral rationality that involves abstraction from localized interpersonal and communal attachments and from the emotions and desires associated with these.
4. To be a 'person' in the fullest sense, is to exercise one's capacity for autonomy in establishing moral principles for oneself or in realizing one's own (authentic) selfhood. Those capacities, in turn, presuppose a special kind of absolute or 'transcendental' freedom.
5. To be a 'person' is to understand oneself as the possessor of a unique personal identity; this necessarily raises the question of the relationship between having personal identity and being human.

The objective-participant conception:

1. To be a human being (or a rational animal) is to act on the basis of reasons, though these reasons may not be fully available to the consciousness of the agent.

³¹ Broadly speaking, theme (1) is 'subjective'; (2)–(3) are 'individualist'; (4)–(5) are 'individualist', combined in (4) with 'subjectivism'.

³² Themes (1)–(5) in each of the two frameworks are designed to be (broadly) analogous to the corresponding points in the other framework. For the claim that we can find competing frameworks of this kind in modern thought, but not of the same kind in ancient Greek thought, see 6.7 below, text to nn. 244–6.

2. To be a human being is to participate in shared forms of human life and 'discourse' about the nature and significance of those shared forms of life. The ethical life of a human being is expressed in whole-hearted engagement with an interpersonal and communal role and in debate about the proper form that such a role should take. The ultimate outcome of these two types of participation is both (a) objective knowledge of what constitutes the best human life and (b) a corresponding character and way of life.
3. To be human is to be the kind of animal whose psycho-ethical life (typically conceived as 'dialogue' between parts of the psyche) is capable, in principle, of being shaped so as to become fully 'reason-ruled' by (a) the action-guiding discourse of interpersonal and communal engagement and (b) reflective debate about the proper goals of a human life.
4. To be human is to be capable, in principle again, of becoming fully 'reason-ruled'. But the extent to which any given human being is able to develop in this way depends on the extent to which she is able to participate effectively in these types of interactive and reflective discourse.
5. To be human is to understand oneself as, at the deepest level, a human being. The fullest possible development of human rationality involves reflective understanding of what 'being human' means, and of how this relates to participation in other kinds of being, such as being animal and divine.

Among the points which this contrasting set of themes is designed to underline is the way in which Greek psychological and ethical thought, whether taken separately or in combination, expresses an objective-participant conception of the person. Thus, Greek psychological thinking characterizes distinctively human action in 'objective' (non-subject-centred terms), for instance, as motivated by reasons (roughly, beliefs) and reasoning, rather than by conscious acts of will.³³ Also, human beings are sometimes presented as functionally adapted to participate in interpersonal and communal relationships, and, in the process, to shape and transform the beliefs which inform desires, emotions, and actions. This process of

³³ Human action-guiding beliefs are normally conceived as being, in principle, conscious but they are not *defined* as conscious, as in a Cartesian framework of thinking: see further 1.1–2 below, esp. 1.2, text to nn. 38–53, 70–84.

development is conceived as yielding, ultimately, full human rationality (being fully 'reason-ruled'), a state which is seen as amenable to objective determination. This process is sometimes presented as culminating in objective ethical knowledge, of a kind that both contributes to the shaping of desires, emotions, and actions, and provides the only secure base for determining what constitutes full human rationality.

This table of contrasting conceptions also illustrates the extent, and the limits of the extent, to which Greek thought can reasonably be said to provide a context for the ideas of 'personality' and 'self'. Some at least of the connotations of these ideas noted at the start of this Introduction are also prominent in the table of subjective-individualist themes. Especially noteworthy there are the ideas of individual distinctiveness and uniqueness, personal identity and (normative) personhood.³⁴ This suggests, what could be argued for independently, that the ideas of 'personality' and 'self', as well as 'personhood', are especially (though not exclusively) associated with the subjective-individualist strand in modern thinking.³⁵ The contrasting ideas in the objective-participant table (which is designed, primarily, to highlight features of Greek thought) tend to be couched rather in terms of psychological functions (especially rationality) and human nature. A possible reaction to this table of contrasting themes might be that, although the book obviously discusses Greek thinking about human psychology and ethics of the sort that *we* associate with the ideas of 'personality' and 'self', it is not clear that it studies these ideas *in* Greek poetry and philosophy. Should not this book have been presented as a study of Greek poetic and philosophical thinking about human nature and rationality?

This is a fair question; but it is also one that can be answered. Part of the aim of this book is, indeed, to bring out the extent to which many of the kinds of concern which we, moderns, tend to associate with the ideas of 'personality', 'self', and 'personal identity' are broadly analogous to those associated in Greek thought with ideas such as being (normatively) 'rational' and 'human'. A further aim is to bring

³⁴ See esp. themes (2), (4), (5), and text to nn. 1, 3 above.

³⁵ For this claim as regards 'personhood', see 6.2 below, text to nn. 9–14; the same point applies to 'self', in so far as this notion is taken to involve the idea of the 'I' as subject (see below 1.1, text to nn. 17–25; 6.2). 'Personality', in the sense of 'distinctive or unique individuality' (see n. 1 above), is closely associated with this strand, but this is not so with 'personality', in the sense of 'psychological structure' (see n. 2 above).

out the point that the relationship between Greek and modern thinking in this respect cannot be understood fully without taking account of the contrast between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of person. We need to appreciate that this is a contrast that functions both *within* modern thinking as well as *between* Greek and (some) modern thinking about the person.³⁶ Certain modern thinkers, including those who write about 'personal identity', 'personhood', or 'personality', argue that current thinking should be more 'objective' or 'participant' in its concepts and methodology than it usually is.³⁷ The objective-participant table thus has a second function. It presents not just analogues in Greek thought to modern ideas about 'personality' and 'selfhood', but also indicates what a more 'objective-participant' conception of these ideas might consist in. By the same token, it suggests that the ideas of 'personality' and 'selfhood' can be seen as having a conceptual place of a sort in Greek thought, provided that we understand these notions in an 'objective-participant' way. These dimensions of my subject would not have emerged if the book had been presented, without more ado, as being about what Greek thinking on what 'being human' involves.

The phrase which serves as the subtitle for this book, 'the self in dialogue', is used within its argument as an image to encapsulate some of the leading features of the objective-participant conception of person, and to underline their interconnections. Although, if my general thesis is correct, this conception underlies, and could be illustrated by, virtually any feature of Greek culture, there is a special appropriateness in illustrating it by reference to some of the many types of dialogue that are central to Greek social and intellectual life. Indeed, one of the points I want to underline in this study is the significant connection between dominant cultural forms (such as the role of dialogue in Greek, and especially Athenian, life) and the conceptions of selfhood conveyed through those forms. Analogously, the dominance in Romantic and post-Romantic artistic life of essentially monologic forms, such as the type of novel, lyric poem, or song that expresses a 'first-personal' sensibility, is surely to be

³⁶ See text to nn. 20–30 above; also 6.7 below, text to nn. 244–6.

³⁷ e.g. Wilkes argues for a more 'objective' and 'objectivist' account of personal identity (text to n. 21 above); Wiggins argues for a more 'participant' account of personhood (6.4 below, text to nn. 78–81).

connected with the dominant patterns of thinking about the self in this period.³⁸

The image of the self *in dialogue* is, in the first instance, designed to have some of the flavour of a paradox, since 'the self' has been characteristically conceived, in the post-Cartesian tradition at least, as a solitary centre of consciousness, a unitary 'I'. Favoured images for this conception are those of the inner 'light' of consciousness or self-consciousness or the first-personal 'viewpoint'.³⁹ (As just noted, the single voice of an isolated figure, articulating this uniquely personal viewpoint, constitutes another characteristic modern way of expressing this conception.) The contrasting notion of 'the self in dialogue' expresses, in the first instance, the idea that the mind constitutes a complex of functions which are unified (in so far as they are unified) by their interaction, rather than as constituting the locus of a unitary 'I'. A suggestive and relevant fact, though one requiring careful interpretation, is that in Greek literature and philosophy, from Homer onwards, thought and other psychological processes are commonly presented in the form of an inner dialogue.⁴⁰

A second connotation of this image is the idea that the ethical life of a human being is, at the most fundamental level, shared rather than private and individuated. This idea has sometimes been expressed in modern philosophy in the image of the 'person' (in a normative sense) as an interlocutor in the kind of public discourse that gives significance to the lives of those participating in it; and sometimes in the idea that to be a 'person' is to engage in a shared form of life, characterized by a nexus of 'reactive attitudes'.⁴¹ A potent image for the latter idea, as it applies to Greek thought, is that of epic or tragic figures locked in agonistic or supplicatory dialogue about issues that are essential to their understanding of their shared human life.⁴²

A third idea, related to the second, is that human beings reach their ethical foundations through shared debate (including debate about what it means to be fully 'human'), rather than by adopting an individual stance of autonomy or self-legislation, or by embarking on

³⁸ See further Rorty (1976), 11; also refs. in 2.5 below, text to nn. 100–9, esp. 106–9.

³⁹ See Ch. 1, n. 39 below.

⁴⁰ See below, e.g. 1.2, text to nn. 92–104; 1.4, text to nn. 189–90, 193; 3.2; 3.6, esp. text to nn. 232–3; 4.2, text to nn. 7–8; 5.7, text to nn. 312–15.

⁴¹ See 1.3 below, text to nn. 117–19.

⁴² For dialogue of this type, see e.g. 2.7, 2.9, 3.3–4 below.

a programme of (individual) self-realization. A relevant fact is that, in Greek philosophy from at least Plato onwards, ethical reflection is characteristically conceived as taking the form of dialectical debate rather than solitary introspection.⁴³ The debates about key ethical questions which play a central role in Homeric epic and Attic tragedy can be seen as anticipating this way of conceiving ethical reflection.⁴⁴ The second and third connotations of this image are rather different from the first, since they relate to conceptions of ethical rather than psychological life. But it is plausible to connect all three sets of connotations with each other; and to see them as expressing a certain conception of human personality as well as, in another way, reflecting the crucial role of oral dialogue in Greek culture.⁴⁵

I clarify the character and shape of the argument of this book shortly by summarizing its contents. But certain further general points need to be made first. This is a book about Greek epic and tragedy as well as philosophy, although so far the discussion has been mostly about Greek and modern philosophy, and the statement of objective-participant themes has been formulated with Greek philosophy especially in mind. However, a key part of my claim is that Greek poetic psychological and ethical models (as illustrated here by reference to Homer and Attic tragedy) are also best interpreted as expressing an objective-participant conception of person rather than as an early or primitive version of the subjective or individualist conception, as they have sometimes been seen.⁴⁶ It may seem that some defence is needed of the inclusion of literature alongside philosophy, as material for a study of Greek thinking about personality. I think that my procedure is defensible against the criticism sometimes made of some other such studies: namely, that they ignore the status of the literary material *as literature*, in treating it as evidence for a conceptual enquiry. In so far as I draw inferences from the content or alleged meaning of these literary works, I base these on the works as a whole, or on passages treated as parts of a larger literary whole, and not simply on statements by epic and tragic per-

⁴³ On Plato, e.g., see 4.5 below, text to nn. 147–53.

⁴⁴ On this type of connection, see further below 4.7, esp. text to nn. 259–78, 293–315.

⁴⁵ The idea that the orality of Greek culture underlies its psychological and conceptual models is proposed by Havelock (e.g. 1963; 1978), also Russo and Simon (1968), though on a more developmental understanding of the history of such models in Greece than is adopted here.

⁴⁶ See Ch. 2 below, esp. 2.4–5, 2.6, 2.8, summarized in text to nn. 55–6 below.

sonae, taken in isolation as if they were theoretical assertions.⁴⁷ But, as is clear already, I am also interested in the formal features of these poetic works, especially their use of dialogue and monologue, and regard these as also significant for this enquiry. Although my reading of Greek literary texts is not designed to be literary criticism of a conventional type, it is intended to contribute to critical understanding of these texts.

An analogous point can be made about the status of this book in relation to philosophy. I have taken as my principal starting-point the claims of contemporary philosophers in the theory of mind and ethics, and I am proposing to base this study, in large measure, on the arguments of Greek philosophers. But I do not wish to present this study as, in itself, a work of philosophy, nor does it belong to the history of philosophy, as this is usually understood. It belongs, in essence, to intellectual history or the history of ideas, and draws on both philosophical and poetic texts as evidence for Greek patterns of thinking about selfhood and personality. However, as in the case of literature, I recognize that we must read philosophy *as philosophy* before using it as material for some other kind of enquiry. Also, it would be disingenuous to pretend that I am wholly neutral as regards the philosophical debates on which I draw. Part of the motivation for the book is to explore the extent to which the objective-participant way of thinking about the person, as embodied in Greek thought, constitutes a psychologically and ethically promising avenue *for us*, given our current intellectual and social situation. But this is simply an implication of the study; the book is not shaped or argued as a set of substantive philosophical claims.⁴⁸

My second general point is this. It will be obvious from what has been said so far that I take seriously the claim that our interpretation of the texts and other material from another culture is, inevitably, informed by the concepts and concerns of our own historico-cultural situation. On the other hand, I am resistant to the extreme version of this claim: that our interpretation of such material consists of *nothing but* the reflection of our concerns. Although I would regard the aspiration to a 'definitive' reading of an ancient Greek (or any other) text as misconceived, I think it is wholly proper for us—in the

⁴⁷ On the issues involved, see Dover (1974), 14–18 and (1983); Nussbaum (1986), 424–5, n. 20; Goldhill (1990), 122–7.

⁴⁸ For some brief suggestions on this philosophical question, see 6.5 below, text to nn. 138–44.

terminology of this study—to try to engage ‘in dialogue’ with Greek culture, and to seek to evolve methods and attitudes which enable the texts, as thus studied, to ‘have a voice’ in this dialogue. I accept that our specific situation disposes us to have a dialogue of a certain kind with the Greek material. But I also think—and this is a crucial assumption of this study—that the concerns of a specific historico-cultural situation may be such as to enable some of the ideas and thought-forms of another culture to let themselves be heard more clearly. Thus, I take my proposals about the linkage between contemporary and Greek versions of the objective-participant conception of the person to be more than simply reflections of the interpretative framework adopted. I also take it that part of an interpreter’s job is to develop methods and attitudes which allow the voice of the text to be heard as clearly as is possible, given the nature of the interpretative approach and the material studied.⁴⁹

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Each of the chapters of this book is organized around a problem, or set of problems, relating to the general issues discussed in the previous section. The Greek material used to illustrate my discussion of these problems is drawn from Homer, Greek tragedy, and, in philosophy, Plato, Aristotle, and (to a significantly lesser extent) the early Stoics and Epicurus.⁵⁰ The scope of the Greek material deployed is, to an extent, arbitrary (or, at least, personal); it would have been possible to discuss these issues in connection with material drawn from different periods and genres. However, the selection of material is designed to illustrate certain kinds of continuity and

⁴⁹ This paragraph is designed to distinguish my approach from the kind of reception-theory represented in e.g. Martindale (1992); on reception-theory, in general, see Holub (1984). On the project of trying to engage in dialogue with, or, as Lukes puts it, to build a ‘bridgehead’ towards, the conceptions of the self or person expressed in other cultures, see Lukes (1985), esp. 297–9.

⁵⁰ A number of factors have shaped this selection of material, including (well-recognized) connections between epic and tragic ethics and psychology, and (less well-recognized) connections between these and Greek philosophical thinking: on the latter, see below 2.2; 3.6; 4.7; 5.6, text to nn. 263–74; 6.3, text to nn. 50–7. In Greek philosophy, I have focused on theories or works which survive in sufficient extent to allow the kind of generalizing and analytic discussion offered here; hence, I make little comment on 5th c. thought (see 6.2 below, text to nn. 62–9) for which the evidence is relatively incomplete. A fuller treatment of Hellenistic ethics and psychology will be given in the work referred to in n. 4 above.

connection which are not always recognized between Greek philosophical thinking and these aspects of the Greek poetic tradition. I also underline some points of connection between the philosophers concerned which are also not always observed.⁵¹ But I must emphasize from the start that I make no pretence at comprehensive coverage of any given Greek author, theory, or text. The aim is to examine a set of problems which, taken together, can illuminate the questions raised here about the interpretation of selfhood and personality in Greek culture.

Similar considerations apply to the selection of modern thinkers and scholars discussed in this book. Although all of these are significant and some highly influential, they have not been selected solely for this reason but rather because they illustrate some aspect of the contrast between objective-participant and subjective-participant conceptions of personality.⁵² MacIntyre and Williams appear at various stages of my argument as representatives, of rather different types, of a ‘participant’ (though not ‘objectivist’) approach to ethics.⁵³ Correspondingly, Terence Irwin, sometimes coupled with Troels Engberg-Pedersen, plays a prominent role, especially in Chapters 4–5; as representative of a broadly Kantian or post-Kantian ethical approach (that is, an approach which is, in a certain sense, ‘individualist’ or ‘objectivist-individualist’).⁵⁴ I use the discussion of the interpretative approaches of these and other scholars as a way of defining, and adjudicating between, readings of the Greek material framed in terms of (aspects of) the two conceptions of the person that I have outlined. As in my Acknowledgements, I stress that disagreement with these and other scholars on the question of the ethical or psychological framework that is best applied to Greek thought does not constitute criticism of their work *as scholars*. What is at issue is the conceptual model (the implied picture of the person) that should inform one’s interpretative reading of the material; and

⁵¹ Annas (1993), esp. ch. 1, brings out very clearly the shared conceptual framework of Aristotle and Hellenistic ethical philosophy; links between Aristotelian and Stoic psychology are underlined by Inwood (1985), chs. 1–2. In Chs. 4–6 below, I stress some important connections between Platonic and later Greek psychological and ethical thinking.

⁵² Hence, other significant and influential scholarly works, even if noted, do not receive similar emphasis in my argument.

⁵³ See e.g. text to nn. 22–5 above, and refs. in nn. 25, 28 above.

⁵⁴ See below 4.3; 4.5, text to nn. 121–37; 5.2; 5.5; 6.2, text to nn. 20–6; 6.6, text to nn. 156–60.

this is a matter on which there is, properly, scope for disagreement as well as for reasoned debate.

In overall structure, the first chapter (primarily on Greek poetry) is designed to explore the ideas of an objective (non-subject-centred) psychological model and a participant ethical model, while subsequent chapters consider some of the ways in which these two models are combined in Greek thought. Chapters 2 and 3, mainly on Greek poetry, and 4 and 5, mainly on Greek philosophy, are especially concerned with the interplay between action-guiding interactive discourse and reflective debate, as this bears on the determination of psychological and ethical norms. The role of participation in these forms of discourse in providing the basis for objective understanding (and realization in one's life and character) of psycho-ethical norms forms the subject of Chapters 4 and 5, and also features in the concluding Chapter 6. The latter chapter also discusses in general terms the opposition between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of personality as part of a comparison between modern thinking about personhood and Greek thinking about what it means to be human.

In Chapter 1, 'Making up Your Mind', I use the question of how to interpret Homeric decision-making scenes as a point of entry to some of the key issues of the book. I show how the interpretation of these scenes by Bruno Snell and A. W. H. Adkins, in which they are taken as indicating a relatively primitive understanding of human personality, rests on a specific set of post-Cartesian assumptions about the mind and post-Kantian assumptions about morality. I discuss some of the philosophical criticisms made of these assumptions, and outline an alternative framework for understanding decision-making, drawn from some contemporary philosophical thinking about psychology and ethics. I note the similarities between these contemporary models and those found in Greek philosophy, especially in Aristotle and Stoic theory. I then offer a reading of the four Iliadic deliberative monologues in the light of those Greek models of practical reasoning and ethical motivation. I conclude by drawing out the implications of this reading for our understanding of the models of mind and ethical agency implied in Homer and in Greek philosophy. My claim is not simply the (unsurprising) one that the psychological and ethical patterns of deliberation in Homer are closer to those of Greek philosophy than they are to the modern models presupposed by Snell and Adkins. It is rather that contem-

porary work in the philosophy of mind and ethics can help us to appreciate the nature and validity of those Greek philosophical and poetic models, instead of seeing them as more or less primitive forerunners of certain types of modern ideas.

In Chapter 2, 'Being-a Hero', I use the reading of epic and tragic texts which have been taken as key expressions of heroism as a way of exploring further the participant ethical approach which, in my view, underlies the presentation of figures in Greek literature. The key texts are Achilles' great speech in Book Nine of the *Iliad* and parts of Euripides' *Medea*. I consider some of the ways in which, in ancient Greek as well as modern criticism, it has been suggested that such heroic figures are ethically 'problematic'. I give special attention to some nineteenth-century post-Romantic accounts of the poetic hero and to their descendants in the critical interpretation of the heroism of Achilles. Such readings are, in my terms, 'subjective-(and subjectivist-)⁵⁵individualist': they are based on the idea that there is an inherent value in 'self'-assertion, even (or especially) when coupled with the rejection of normal ethical standards. My claim is that, although these figures have sometimes been treated as social outsiders, or (in a different intellectual idiom) as marginal figures, their ethical stance is that of people who are deeply committed to (what they see as being) the norms governing interpersonal relationships in their communities. What are sometimes taken as acts or statements of radical self-assertion or individualism are better understood as exemplary gestures, designed to dramatize what they see as fundamental breaches in these norms. These exemplary gestures imply, at least, a special degree of reflectiveness about the proper form and goals of a human life.

In this connection, I also re-examine the distinction between 'character' and 'personality' that I have used elsewhere to define what is involved in giving an appropriate (and appropriately complex) response to epic and tragic figures. Much of what I have intended previously to convey by that distinction is now embodied in the contrast between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of personality that is central to this book. But I question the idea proposed elsewhere that, at climactic moments, the *Iliad* and tragedy invites the adoption of a non-evaluative

⁵⁵ On the significance of the phraseology, see nn. 21, 30 above. See further 2.3, 2.5 below.

'personality-viewpoint' of its key figures. I suggest that the process I have in view is better understood in terms of the unfolding 'dialectic' of the epic or tragic poem, and of the audience's engagement with the figures who act as vehicles of that dialectic. The audience's engagement is of a kind which enables them to take seriously the status of the heroic acts and stances as exemplary gestures, without losing sight of the way in which such gestures are, in conventional ethical terms, deeply problematic.⁵⁶

In Chapter 3, 'The Divided Self in Greek Poetry', I explore inter-connections between the objective (non-subject-centred) psychological model and the participant ethical model outlined in Chapter 1; I also take account of the elaboration of the participant ethical model offered in Chapter 2. I do so by considering a series of Greek epic and tragic passages which display psychological (or psycho-ethical) conflict or division. These passages have sometimes been analysed, by Snell, for instance, in the light of a post-Cartesian model of mind and a post-Kantian moral model. Accordingly, they have been seen as, in one respect, crucial stepping-stones towards a more 'inward' and 'personal' (or 'subjective-individualist') conception of personality, and, in another, as exemplifying the conflict between reason (or rational will) and passion. I offer an alternative reading, which is 'objective-participant' in the sense indicated. I stress, in particular, the point that Greek epic and tragedy (like Greek philosophy, as I believe) seems to presuppose a psychological model in which (adult human) emotions and desires are informed by beliefs and reasoning; hence, the reason-passion contrast, at least as Snell deploys this, fails to match this model. I suggest that the conflicts that Snell interprets in these terms are better conceived as that between a heroic figure's desire to make, or to stand by, an exemplary gesture and the more conventional ethical claims whose validity is also recognized by the figure. In addition, I consider how far these poetic conflicts, when discussed by Greek philosophers, are analysed in the terms used here; and how far an analogous conflict figures as part of Greek philosophical thinking, a point pursued later in the book.⁵⁷

In the next two chapters, and in the concluding chapter, I take up a series of issues in Greek philosophy which both highlight the

⁵⁶ See 2.4 below, text to nn. 71–2; also 2.6–9.

⁵⁷ See below 3.6, esp. text to nn. 240–3; 4.7; 5.6, text to nn. 263–74.

conception of personality embodied there and serve to underline points of continuity with the thinking of Greek epic and tragedy. One recurrent issue is the question of what it means to be, normatively, 'rational' (or 'reasonable' or 'reason-ruled'),⁵⁸ and how this is related to being 'human', in the full sense. A key theme in these chapters is the relationship between 'first-order' (practical, deliberative) reasoning and 'second-order' (reflective) reasoning. A related theme is the relationship between the action-guiding beliefs, and the types of virtues, promoted by conventional interactive discourse and those promoted by reflective debate and post-reflective understanding. By reference to these themes, we can distinguish two broad patterns of thinking in Greek philosophy. In the first pattern, found in Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle, and in certain strands of Stoic thinking, full human ethical development is conceived as a two-stage process. First, there is the development of virtuous dispositions and first-order reasoning through participation in (proper forms of) interpersonal and communal exchange. Then, reflective debate (second-order reasoning) leading, in principle, to objective knowledge of psycho-ethical norms sets the standards for pre-reflective virtue, and modifies the understanding of what virtue, at its best, consists in. In the second pattern, prominent in Epicurean thought, and also found in certain strands of Platonic and Stoic thought, post-reflective understanding is a prerequisite for properly conducted first-order reasoning, and for the shaping of character, interpersonal relationships, and the way of life.⁵⁹ In both versions, I argue that this way of thinking combines an objective (non-subject-centred) psychological model with a participant ethical mode and objectivism as regards psycho-ethical norms.

I also claim that this way of understanding human rationality is prefigured in Greek epic and tragedy. The parallels between Greek philosophical and poetic thinking about first-order (practical, deliberative) reasoning have already been examined in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, I have argued that the heroic stances (including the exemplary gestures) of the problematic heroes of Greek epic and tragedy imply a type of second-order reasoning, namely reflection

⁵⁸ I sometimes use 'reasonable' as a term of art to identify the specifically normative sense of 'rational'. On 'reasonable' and cognate ideas, as relevant to poetic as well as philosophical discourse, see 3.1 below, text to nn. 16–22.

⁵⁹ See below 4.4–5; 4.6, text to nn. 179–88; 5.5, text to nn. 209–33; 5.6, text to nn. 251–77; 5.7, text to nn. 339–64; 6.5, text to nn. 123–9; 6.7, text to nn. 232–5.

about the proper form of human relationships and a human life. In Chapters 4–5, I pursue the question raised in Chapter 3, whether there is any equivalent in Greek philosophy for the kind of ethical conflict (generating psycho-ethical division) considered there; namely between the hero's wish to maintain her exemplary stance (based on implied reflective reasoning) and her recognition of the conventional ethical claims that normally shape first-order, practical reasoning.

I suggest that a parallel tension sometimes arises in Greek philosophy in connection with the relationship between the type of virtue and happiness generated by conventional interactive exchange and that generated by post-reflective understanding (this tension may arise even under ideal circumstances). I consider especially in this connection Plato's presentation of the (complex) attitude of the philosopher-rulers to re-entering the cave in the *Republic* and Aristotle's assertion of the superiority of contemplative to ethico-practical wisdom in *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) 10. 7–8. I suggest that the preference for contemplative rather than ethico-practical wisdom explicit or implied in these cases represents an acknowledgement of a tension between pre-reflective and post-reflective ethical understanding that is as problematic as that examined in Greek poetry, and in some ways more so.⁶⁰ However, I also consider ways in which this type of conflict may be at least partly resolvable, notably through the idea that recognizing the preferability of contemplative wisdom can reshape the practical direction of one's own life and that communicating this preferability confers the greatest possible benefit on others. I also situate this form of resolution (where it occurs) in the larger framework of Greek ethical thinking, in which the direction of a human life is seen as properly shaped by a combination of (the right types of) interactive and reflective discourse.⁶¹

A third general theme of these chapters, and one which underlines the question of the conception of the person embodied in the Greek theories, is that of the relationship between the pattern of thinking about human ethical rationality in Greek philosophy and in modern ethical thinking. In Chapters 4–5, I define my understanding of the Greek pattern of thinking by contrast with Irwin's broadly Kantian approach, which seems to me to presuppose an inappropriately

⁶⁰ See below 4.7, esp. text to nn. 290–4.

⁶¹ See below 4.7, text to nn. 281–9; 5.3, text to nn. 85–104; 5.6; 5.7, text to nn. 292–364.

'individualist' picture of ethical life and ethical reflection. In both Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, I argue that Irwin understates the role of (the right kind of) participation in interpersonal and communal exchange in shaping (first-order) ethico-practical reasoning and dispositions. I also argue that his account of reflective (second-order) reasoning in these theories, as a form of individual reflection directed at realization of oneself as a rational agent, understates both the 'participant' dimension of reflection (as shared debate or dialectic) and the way that this 'participant' dimension is related to the ethical 'objectivism' of Plato's theory.⁶² My debate with Irwin's readings of these texts thus serves to illustrate the contrast between (Kantian or post-Kantian) 'individualist' approaches to ethics and the 'objective-participant' approach that I am attributing to the Greek theories.

I define the character of the Greek theories further by contrast with the anti-Kantian approaches of MacIntyre and Williams. Their theories help us to give proper weight in Greek philosophy to the role of interactive participation in shaping ethico-practical reasoning and pre-reflective virtue. On the other hand, they do not see ethical reflection as making an independent contribution to ethical life, and as yielding, ultimately, objective understanding of psycho-ethical norms of a kind that can legitimately reshape pre-reflective understanding of virtue and happiness. In this respect, their approach is significantly different from that of the Greek theories. The distinctive (objectivist-participant) character of Greek ethical thinking derives from the weight attached to both these aspects of ethical life, which also serves to generate the conflicts noted earlier.⁶³ The contrast with both these types of modern theory serves to underline the character of the Greek ethical approach and the conception of person that this embodies.

In Chapter 4, 'The Personality Unified by Reason's Rule in Plato's *Republic*', I take the *Republic* as displaying several of the features that I have presented as characteristic of Greek ethical philosophy. Plato's psycho-ethical norm, the 'reason-ruled' psyche

⁶² Irwin's interpretation of Plato and Aristotle, like Engberg-Pedersen's interpretation of Stoic theory, is also 'objectivist', but combined with a (broadly) Kantian ethical individualism and with a (subjective) focus on the idea of 'self'-realization; see below 4.5, text to nn. 121–37; 6.2, text to nn. 20–4.

⁶³ See text to nn. 22–5 above; and below 4.5, text to nn. 162–73; 6.4–5, taken with refs. in n. 61 above.

or 'personality'⁶⁴ is presented as the product of a two-stage educational programme, which constitutes one version of the pattern of thinking about the relationship between interactive exchange and reflective debate outlined earlier.⁶⁵ The first stage, the shaping of dispositions through proper forms of interpersonal and communal engagement, confers a certain type of psycho-ethical unity or 'harmony', and one which is, in some ways, intensified by the second stage, reflective debate yielding, ultimately, post-reflective understanding.⁶⁶ The *Republic* defines a complex, but largely cohesive, relationship between these two types of harmony (pre- and post-reflective virtue). But this relationship allows for the degree of tension within post-reflective virtue (between the rival claims of knowledge and knowledge-based practical action) acknowledged in Plato's presentation of the attitude of the philosopher-rulers to re-entering the cave. As indicated, I define the objective- (and objectivist-) participant pattern of thinking about the person exemplified here by partial contrast with individualist and participant strands in modern moral thinking.

In Chapter Five, 'Being Yourself and Meeting the Claims of Others', I discuss the implications for my project of Greek philosophical ways of presenting, and seeking to resolve, a related tension or conflict: that between pursuing our own happiness and meeting the ethical claims of other people. I argue that we need to situate Greek thinking on this topic in the appropriate type of ethical framework. This is one centred on the ideals of 'the shared life' and proper forms of reciprocity rather than on that of altruism (defined by contrast to egoism). I also suggest that this framework provides the best context in which to understand the significance of the claims made explicitly by Aristotle and implicitly by Plato in the *Republic* about the ultimate preferability of post-reflective knowledge rather than ethico-practical action.

I focus on Aristotle's use of the idea of our 'true self' (more precisely 'what each of us is') to define the psycho-ethical norm in his analysis of the best kind of friendship and the highest kind of

⁶⁴ Greek terms are normally transliterated or given in Greek script in this book; but I treat psyche as a naturalized English word. 'Psyche' in *R.* signifies 'personality' in the sense of 'psychological structure' (n. 2 above), see 4.2 below; on the meaning of 'psyche' before Plato, see Claus (1981).

⁶⁵ See 4.4–5 below, taken with text to n. 59 above.

⁶⁶ See below (on Plato) 4.6, also 6.6, text to nn. 165–96; see also (on Aristotle) 5.5–6.

human happiness (*NE* 9. 4, 8 and 10. 7–8). As in the case of Plato's *Republic*, I stress the importance of situating Aristotle's use of this idea in the context of a two-stage programme for the fullest realization of ethical rationality. Aristotle both (1) presupposes certain preconditions (including the development of virtuous dispositions through interpersonal relationships) for the reflective understanding of 'what each of us is'; and (2) claims that properly grounded reflective debate can transform our understanding of what this idea involves. The combination of these two features distinguishes Aristotle's theory (as it does Plato's)⁶⁷ from certain uses of the ideas of personal identity or selfhood in contemporary moral theory. In particular, it distinguishes the Greek procedure from modern uses of these notions as 'Archimedean' points, designed to convince *anyone* that it is worthwhile for him, as a rational agent, to become ethically good and altruistic. I define my interpretative approach, again, by partial contrast with Irwin's (among others), which both assumes the relevance of altruism as an interpersonal norm and seems to me to understate the ethical complexity associated with Aristotle's use of the idea of 'what each of us is', especially as deployed in *NE* 10. 7–8. I consider comparable ways of conceiving, and seeking to resolve, this issue in other Greek theories, including the form of resolution noted earlier: that *communicating* the ultimate preferability of post-reflective knowledge is the most profound way of benefiting others, even though it conflicts with the pre-reflective understanding of what other-benefiting action involves. I take this as an example of the way in which, in Greek thought, reflection, if based on proper interactive exchange, is seen as entitled to extend and reshape the understanding of what a shared human life, at its best, consists in.⁶⁸

In the final chapter (6), 'Being a Person and Being Human', I consider how far the kind of Greek thinking about psycho-ethical norms (typically, about what it means to be, normatively, 'human') discussed in Chapters 4–5 is comparable with modern thinking about personhood and personal identity. I compare both the criteria for normative status and the methodology for defining such status deployed in ancient and modern theory. The criteria for personhood considered are subjectivity and the capacity for second-order

⁶⁷ See refs. in n. 61 above.

⁶⁸ See below 4.7, text to nn. 286–9; 5.3, text to nn. 85–6; 5.6 text to nn. 251–77; 5.7, text to nn. 325–31.

psychological functions. My main point is that, although Greek and modern theories can, validly, be compared in general terms in this respect, the extent to which the two types of theory are fully comparable depends on the extent to which modern theories, like Greek theories, are objective- (and objectivist-) participant in the way in which, as I claim, Greek theories are. This point is developed especially in the comparison of Frankfurt's criterion of personhood (the capacity for second-order desires) with Greek thinking, both poetic and philosophical, about first- and second-order reasoning.

This point also bears on the comparison between the methodology of normative concepts in Greek and in modern theory. I stress the relevance to this question also of the two-stage, or two-level, programme of psycho-ethical development outlined earlier, involving the combination of interactive exchange and reflective debate.⁶⁹ I argue that this must be borne in mind in interpreting what Greek philosophers mean by saying that a certain conception of what it means to be fully human or divine is grounded in 'nature'. In other words, in partial qualification of the view of MacIntyre and Williams on this subject, I argue that we need to understand the objectivism (and, in a certain sense, 'naturalism') of Greek thinking about psycho-ethical norms in the light of their thinking about the role of interactive and reflective participation. I suggest that this feature bears on the question of the extent to which Greek ideas on this subject can be seen as a conceptual option *for us*. I also suggest that this point carries inferences about the extent to which, in Greek thinking, each or any of us is held responsible for achieving, or free to achieve, full normatively 'human' status. I conclude by reflecting on the conceptual status of the contrast between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of person which is central to my study of Greek thinking about personality and selfhood, and on the possible implications of this contrast for cross-cultural comparison of ideas.

⁶⁹ See 6.4–5 below; also refs. in n. 59 above.

1

Making up Your Mind

1.1 SNELL AND ADKINS ON THE DECIDING SELF

As a point of access to the issues of this book, I use the question of how to interpret Homeric decision-making. This is a well-established topic of scholarly debate; it is also one in which the crucial importance of the psychological and ethical assumptions brought to the topic has been underlined by some recent contributions.¹ I develop the latter point in a way which brings out some of the aspects of the contrast between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of the person. I take the comments on Homeric deliberation by Bruno Snell and A. W. H. Adkins as expressing certain leading features of post-Cartesian and post-Kantian thinking about the self and personhood. I note some of the recent criticisms of that way of thinking by philosophers of mind and ethics, particularly those which are linked with a favourable reappraisal of Greek thought. Subsequently, I offer an alternative account of Homeric deliberation, focused on a reading of the four deliberative monologues in the *Iliad*. This account is based on two correlated ideas: that Greek philosophical thinking about practical reasoning and ethical motivation can help us to make sense of Homeric deliberation, and that Homeric deliberation can, in a sense, serve to illustrate Greek philosophical thinking on these subjects.² This is related, in turn, to a further claim: that contemporary philosophical debate helps us to see the coherence and validity of Homeric and Greek philosophical patterns of thinking on these subjects.

My line of argument raises one general question, which should be made explicit from the start: this is the question of the extent to

¹ See Gaskin (1990); Williams (1993), ch. 2; Sharples (1983); the point is not taken by Erbse (1990).

² To put it differently, Homeric patterns of deliberation prefigure, and perhaps help to shape, philosophical thinking on this topic; see 1.2 below, esp. text to nn. 62–3, 101–4.

which we should see human thinking on the nature of deliberation as changing, or developing, in the course of history. Snell and Adkins are conspicuous examples of those who believe that we should see development from Greek to modern thinking on this topic; Snell also believes that we should see development in this respect in the course of Greek history. Other scholars, particularly those whose approach is that of cultural anthropology, see Greek thinking on this topic as part of the 'mentality' (the nexus of thought-forms and social practices) present in the culture at any given period.³ The line of argument adopted here may seem (almost perversely) to ignore the possibility of cultural change of this type. This is not really so. The idea, fundamental to this project, that certain changes in contemporary thought put us in a better position to appreciate Greek thought entails the recognition of change within modern thought.⁴ As regards the question of change, or development, of thinking within Greek culture, I express no particular view here. An implication of my argument is that there is a good deal of continuity in this respect, and more than has often been realized. But it is not my principal intention to argue for a continuity-centred rather than a developmental view of Greek cultural history. I do not really think we are yet in a position to form a clear view on this question, at least as regards conceptions of selfhood and personality. I believe that the first objective should be to think through the implications of these recent changes in our own intellectual framework for our understanding of Greek culture (of any period). The project of forming a systematic picture of how periods of Greek culture are interrelated on this question seems to me to be a distinct one (one that presupposes some progress in the first), and it is not one that I attempt here.

Certain comments of Snell and Adkins form my starting-point here. Snell argued that Homeric vocabulary shows an absence of awareness of a unitary self, as distinct from quasi-independent psychological (or rather psychophysical) forces; and that, relatedly, no Homeric figure acts as a fully integrated and autonomous agent, who is capable of genuine personal decisions.⁵ I reflect on his reasons for making these claims, focusing especially on his criteria

³ See Introd., text to n. 11. Vernant (1981a) and Said (1978), part 2, might be taken as relevant examples of this approach.

⁴ See Introd., text to nn. 21–30, 49.

⁵ See Snell (1960), ch. 1, esp. 20–1, and ch. 5, esp. 102–3.

for what should count as a 'genuine personal decision'. Especially revealing in this connection is Snell's response to the criticisms made by Erwin Wolff of Snell's account of the difference between Aeschylean tragedy and Homeric epic in this respect.⁶ Wolff argued (what many others have thought) that Snell's contrast between Homer and Aeschylus in this regard is overstated. He pointed out that there are several scenes in the *Iliad*, for instance, in which figures deliberate about the merits of alternative courses of action. Indeed, he argued, the *Iliad* as a whole is structured around scenes in which Achilles, in Book Nine, and Hector, in Book Eighteen, make crucial—and disastrous—choices about what to do.⁷

Snell replied that Wolff had missed his point. Of course, there are decisions of a kind in Homer (gods do not always intervene at the crucial moment); but they are not genuinely *personal* (*persönliche*) decisions, not decisions which are truly *one's own* (*eigene*). What characterizes such decisions? Snell seems to have two principal criteria in mind. One is that the chooser should be conscious *at the time* of the fact that he is making a decision. Implied decisions (ones in which the figure does not express his awareness of the fact that he is making a decision) do not meet this condition. Hence, Achilles' implied decision in Book Nine to stay at Troy but not to fight does not count.⁸ Snell's prize exhibit is rather the speech of Pelasgus in Aeschylus' *Suppliants*, in which the king articulates at the time the need for deep thought about how to respond to the Danaids' supplication: 'We need deep thought to save us, to go into the depths like a diver, clear-sighted, sober . . . do we not seem to need preserving thought?'⁹ Snell's second criterion is an elaboration of the first. His ideal chooser is not only conscious of choosing, but also conscious that *he* is choosing, and that his act is to that extent *his own*. What does this criterion involve? Part of what seems to be required is that one be conscious of having, or being, a unitary self, an 'I', and conscious that it is this 'I' that makes the choice. For Snell, Homeric psychological vocabulary indicates the absence of the sense of a unitary, choosing self. Acts are understood in Homer as responses to

⁶ Snell (1930), responding to Wolff (1929), a review of Snell (1928).

⁷ An alternative line of criticism is provided by Lesky (1961), and (1966), anticipated briefly by Wolff (1929), 399–400: in Aeschylus, as in Homer, we find a combination (and fusion) of human and divine agency.

⁸ *Il.* 9. 649–55 (see further 2.7 below, text to nn. 158–62); see Snell (1930), 147–9.

⁹ *Supp.* 407–9, my tr.; see Snell (1928), 59 ff., (1930), 144, (1960), 100–3.

the impact of one or other quasi-autonomous psychological function, such as *thumos* or *menos*, rather than as choices which 'I' am conscious of making. Thus, when Achilles says in *Iliad* 18. 90–4, that his *thumos* tells him not to go on living unless Hector dies to avenge Patroclus' death, this shows that he is not conscious that *he* is making a decision.¹⁰

The requirement that *I* decide also rules out decisions whose grounds are couched in purely impersonal or objective terms. Thus in *Iliad* 11. 404–10, the fact that Odysseus talks in general terms (about how someone behaves who 'is to be best in battle') rather than about how *he* should act shows that this is not a genuinely personal decision. Indeed, the fact that Odysseus refers only to 'an objective norm' and not to his personal attitude indicates that the decision is not really an 'inner' one but is brought about, in effect, 'from outside' (*durch ein Aussen herbeigeführt*). Snell is not demanding that, in a genuine personal decision, the criteria be somehow *uniquely* personal to me, that they be criteria whose significance only *I* can fully recognize. He is asking rather that the decision involve the consciousness that *I* am choosing (that this is my *Willensakt* or *Entscheidung*).¹¹ Thus, even if the person concerned refers to some general factors (as Pelasgus refers to the interests of the state), those factors must not be presented as determining the issue. It must be clear that the person deciding chooses to endorse those factors, and that he is (and knows he is) the responsible agent.¹²

I want to couple with Snell's claims about Homeric psychology Adkins's claims about Greek psychology in general.¹³ Like other scholars, Adkins adopts only in a modified form Snell's view that Homeric vocabulary expresses a view of man as psychologically incoherent and passive.¹⁴ But he reinforces Snell's claim that Homeric decision-scenes (if it is appropriate to call them that) show

¹⁰ Snell, (1930), 150, (1960), 20–1. These Homeric psychological terms are notoriously difficult to translate: both *thumos* and *menos* are often rendered as 'spirit', 'passion', or 'impulse'. See Padel (1992), ch. 2, esp. 24–33.

¹¹ Snell (1930), 145; also (1960), 159, discussed in text to n. 32 below. See also Voigt (1934), 73–4, 86, 91–2.

¹² Snell (1928), 63, (1930), 144; see A. *Supp.* 407–17.

¹³ My concern is mainly with Adkins (1970), though his views there need to be understood by reference to his major work (1960).

¹⁴ He recognizes that the opposition of 'I' and *thumos* (for instance) constitutes some degree of personal agency, Adkins (1970), 22–3.

a deficient realization of what psychological unity involves. Furthermore, he claims that this deficiency persists in Greek culture and that it is still present in philosophical analyses of the psyche¹⁵ and of decision-making, whereas Snell sees significant advances in understanding the self in these stages of Greek culture. Adkins has various reasons for this extension of Snell's claims; but the most important one is his belief that (what he calls a) 'results culture' inhibits both the actual development of psychological unity and the theoretical understanding of what such unity involves.

Reviewing Snell's discussion of Homeric deliberation, Adkins affirms Snell's position that Homer does not know genuine personal decision, but gives an additional reason for doing so. This is that Homeric formulations such as 'this appeared to me in my *thumos* to be the best plan' provide a less adequate 'bridge' between plan and action than does the phrase, 'I decided'. When we say, 'I decided':

the personal pronoun makes it easier for the mind to pass from decision to action. For there is a distinct difference in model . . . between 'I decided' and 'it seemed best to me'. The latter suggests a kind of spectral balance into which the reasons on one side or the other are poured until at length, after due consideration, the balance goes down by itself and action ensues. (1970, 24)

Adkins makes a similar point in connection with Aristotle's analysis of *akrasia* (roughly, 'weakness of will') in logical terms, in *NE* 7. 3:

Aristotle's final analysis of *akrasia* leaves no more than a spectral balance or tug-of-war, and, as in Homer, the inclination of the balance or the victory in the tug-of-war determines action. Indeed, the situation is in one sense less 'personal' than it was in Homer: there the democratic polity of psychological functions shared the consciousness among themselves, and were in effect so many little persons within the person . . . Now in Aristotle's analysis of action, the personality manifests itself simply as its warring factions . . . (ibid. 195)

What exactly is the point which Adkins is making? There are really two different points. One (which is an extension of Snell's claim about Homeric psychological vocabulary) is that the analysis of decisions in terms of psychological parts or functions, instead of a deciding 'I', shows a lack of understanding of the person as a unit.

¹⁵ As noted in *Introd.*, n. 64, I normally treat 'psyche' as a naturalized English term and do not transliterate it like other Greek terms.

Hence, for Adkins, Greek philosophy, as well as Homer, is deficient in this respect. The second point relates to the analysis of decision in terms of the agent's reasons for action (what Adkins calls the 'spectral balance' or 'tug-of-war') rather than as an expression of his will. Adkins takes the former type of analysis to be characteristic of a framework of thinking which is 'calculative' rather than 'volitional'. He claims further that only the latter type of analysis represents the person as unified. The fact that in the Greek models (as exemplified in Homer and Aristotle) decisions are conceived *simply* as the weighing of considerations or reasons without any *distinct* act of will shows the absence of a sense of the person as a unified locus of will.¹⁶ It is thus a very specific kind of psychological unity Adkins finds missing in Greek philosophical psychology, and one which makes very precise stipulations about what psychological unity depends on.

What is the basis for Snell's stipulations about what is to count as a genuine personal decision, or for Adkins's demand, as a prerequisite of psychological unity, that the person be conceived as a locus of will? Revealingly, neither scholar addresses this question explicitly; they assume that they can appeal to presuppositions about what it is to be a 'person', or to have a unified self, which are intuitively obvious to any modern reader. But they both offer indications about the intellectual tradition that they assume; and I supplement those indications.

Broadly speaking, Snell and Adkins presuppose a post-Cartesian conception of the self and a post-Kantian conception of a (moral) decision; they also presuppose certain interconnections between those ideas. A crucial part of Descartes's thinking was his assumption that the way in which I understand myself (who 'I' am) is both authoritative in itself and can form the basis of an understanding of his knowledge of the world. His belief that he was 'a thing which thinks' (*res cogitans*) was regarded by him as the sole one that was beyond doubt, and which could therefore serve as the basis of his reconstitution of his knowledge of the world. In effect, Descartes gives a fundamental role to what is now called the 'first-personal' view (*my*—uniquely privileged—understanding of who *I* am). The importance of this move in the history of modern European thought is hard to overstate; certainly, it has had a lasting impact on the

¹⁶ Adkins (1970), 47, 90, 126, 196–7, 271.

evolution of subsequent thinking on the self and personhood.¹⁷ Descartes's conception of himself as a 'thinking thing' was coupled with a further influential assumption, that all psychological processes (which he called 'thought') are necessarily conscious. As he puts it:

Thought is a word that covers everything that exists in us in such a way that we are immediately conscious of it. Thus all the operations of will, intellect, imagination, and of the senses are thoughts.

But what then am I? A thing which thinks. What is a thing which thinks? It is a thing which doubts, understands, conceives, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels.¹⁸

Cartesian assumptions about 'thought' and about selfhood are apparent in Locke's famous formulation of what it means to be a 'person' in the strong sense, that is, one who is conscious of himself as being a unified centre of consciousness and will. Thus, as he puts it: '[a] person . . . is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking and, as it seems to me, essential to it'. In a related passage, Locke connects this dimension of personhood with the moral or 'forensic' aspect. The name of 'person':

belongs only to intelligent agents capable of a law, and happiness, and misery. This personality [i.e. being a 'person' in this sense] extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness, whereby it becomes concerned and accountable, owns and imputes to itself past actions just upon the same ground and for the same reason that it does the present.¹⁹

Snell sometimes makes it plain that he presupposes, as the background for his work, an intellectual tradition in which self-consciousness is conceived as the central human characteristic. Responding to Wolff's criticisms, he explains that the larger context of his work on Greek culture is a question whose importance was brought out by Hegel, Schelling, and Nietzsche, that of the

¹⁷ On Descartes's argument, see Smith and Jones (1986), ch. 3; and, on its radical novelty and significance in European philosophy, see Burnyeat (1982), 43–50, Solomon (1988), 5–6. See also Gill (1991), 166–7; and 6.2 below, text to nn. 27–30.

¹⁸ Quotations taken from Haldane and Ross (1967), vol. 2, 52, vol. 1, 153; see also Wilkes (1988), 215–16.

¹⁹ Locke (1694), 2. 27. 9, cited from Perry (1975), 39, 50–1.

relationship between self-consciousness (*Bewusstsein*) and action (*Handeln*).²⁰ Above all, Snell presupposes the Hegelian view of the history of civilization as the dialectical evolution of the spirit or mind (*Geist*) towards ever heightened self-awareness. He refers to Hegel's schema for this dialectical evolution (thesis–antithesis–synthesis) in his characterization of the dominant genres in early Greek culture. In epic, the world is understood only in objective terms (as forces to which man is subordinate); man's awareness of his capacity to be a subject of consciousness and source of action is not yet developed. In lyric, we find the beginnings of subjective consciousness and inner conflict. In drama we have the synthesis of epic and lyric: the subjective consciousness confronts the world and discovers both the capacity for decision and action and the necessary constraints of human life.²¹ In so doing, 'man grasps the understanding of his "I" as something that is truly inner—not just as an "it" or "you" as in epic or lyric'.²² In his most ambitious work, the collection of essays translated as *The Discovery of the Mind*, the original title, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*, seems designed to evoke Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, and to be an illustration of the unfolding history of self-consciousness on broadly Hegelian lines.²³

Snell's larger framework of assumptions explains the kind of historico-cultural development he sees at work in Greek culture. It also helps to explain his conception of what counts as a 'genuine personal decision'. This kind of decision is one in which the decider acts as a 'person', in the post-Cartesian sense, that is, as one who is conscious of herself as a locus of deliberation and will. The decision is the person's 'own' because she is conscious that *she* is making it. More precisely, she is conscious that there is an 'I' (a Cartesian subject) who is making the decision, and who is therefore responsible for it; the decision is not attributed to 'external' factors, either within the self or in the context in which the person decides.²⁴ Unlike

²⁰ Snell (1930), 141.

²¹ Snell (1928), 32–3; see also (1930), 151 and 157. For the conception of tragedy involved, the struggle between subject and object, freedom and necessity, see (on Schelling), Silk and Stern (1981), 305–12.

²² Snell (1928), 33, my tr. The point seems to be that man grasps himself as an 'it' in epic (an aggregate of passive forces), a 'you' in lyric (an object of self-address), and only in tragedy as an 'I' (a subject of self-consciousness, will, and action).

²³ The project is anticipated in Snell (1930), 157–8; see also MacCary (1982), 3 ff.

²⁴ See esp. Snell (1930), 142, 144–5; on possible Kantian influence on Snell's criteria, see text to nn. 33–4 below.

Snell, Adkins does not explicate the background of his thinking about the deciding agent as an 'I' or subject. But it seems clear that he shares Snell's post-Cartesian assumptions about what counts as a 'genuine personal decision'. This goes some way towards explaining his (otherwise undefended) preference for phraseology of the kind 'I decided' rather than 'it seemed best to me'. The assumption seems again to be that this type of phraseology shows that there is an understanding of oneself as an 'I' in the Cartesian sense, as a self-conscious, and self-consciously choosing, agent.²⁵

However, to make full sense of the views of Snell and Adkins on Homeric decision-making, we need also to take account of a second, though related, strand of modern European thought: that deriving from Kant's moral thinking. This bears especially on the emphasis which each of them, in somewhat different ways, places on the idea of 'will'. This emphasis seems partly to reflect the fact that they assume a 'volitionist' model of action; that is, a model according to which each action is preceded, and caused, by a distinct and conscious act of will.²⁶ But, over and above this, their comments presuppose Kant's conception of morality and of what counts as a properly *moral* decision. Several features are relevant here, including Kant's conviction that the only thing that is good absolutely is a (morally) good will, and not, for instance, happiness; and that the worth of a good will is not affected by the success or failure of the results of this will. This idea clearly forms a key part of the background for Adkins's characterization of Greece (by contrast, it would seem, with our culture) as a 'results culture', which undervalued intentions.²⁷ But also crucial is Kant's belief that a properly moral response involves a stance of 'autonomy'. This belief had held an importance in moral theory comparable to that held in the theory of mind and personal identity by Descartes's belief in the fundamental character of the first-personal view. The combination of the two ideas has played a crucial role in shaping subsequent modern thinking on the self and personhood.²⁸ However, it is Kant's theory in its original form that is relevant for Snell and Adkins. This theory

²⁵ See Adkins (1970), 24 and 195, cited on p. 33 above.

²⁶ See Smith and Jones (1986), 123–7, who note the appeal of this type of model for those who have a (broadly) Cartesian picture of the mind and the mind–body relationship. See also Kahn (1988), 235–6.

²⁷ Kant (1948) (= *ML*), pp. 59–60; and, on Adkins, see text to nn. 35–6 below.

²⁸ See *Introd.*, text to nn. 26–7; and below 2.5, text to nn. 100–9; 6.2–3.

combines two seemingly opposed principles. One is that the properly moral response (that of the 'good will') expresses itself in making laws for oneself (being 'autonomous', in this sense). The other is that the laws so made must be those which one sees as applying universally, to others equally as to oneself. As Kant puts it, in one of the two formulations of the categorical imperative that is fundamental to morality: 'Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.'²⁹ The 'autonomy' of the will is that property which enables us to bind ourselves to universal laws in this way. The exercise of this autonomy involves a special kind of rationality, whereby we abstract ourselves from sensual and emotional inclinations and prudential considerations (at least from those which we cannot rationally regard as consistent with universal laws). But Kant also envisages our commitment to these self-made laws as being, in principle, total, and infused by what he calls 'reverence for the law'.³⁰

Snell is not as explicit about the influence of Kant as he is about some other aspects of his intellectual framework; but chapter 8 of *The Discovery of the Mind* (1960) is, clearly, shaped by Kantian moral thinking. The question posed in the chapter is this: 'in what form did the moral imperative present itself to the Greeks?' (p. 155). The formulation of the question is Kantian, as are the criteria used to determine how far Greek thought came close to the understanding of genuinely 'moral' principles, namely through the distinction between moral and prudential considerations and through the achievement of the concept of a 'good will'.³¹ Kant's conception of the moral response as that of binding oneself to universal principles is apparent in Snell's commentary on one of the Homeric deliberative monologues discussed later, *Il.* 11. 404–10:

²⁹ Kant, *ML*, p. 84; a 'categorical' imperative applies absolutely, and a 'maxim' is a 'principle on which the subject acts'. The second formulation of the categorical imperative is, 'Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end' (*ibid.*, 91).

³⁰ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 101–2, 66; also Hill (1989), 96–9; see further 1.3 below, text to nn. 107–9, 114–16.

³¹ See Snell (1960), 154–60, 163–4, 165–7 (Kant's classic example of a moral maxim 'do not lie'), 167–70, 178, 182–3 (esp. 'not the good will, but the will, or choice, of the good', 183), 186–8. In effect, Snell's picture of Greek ethics is that of an (incomplete) progress from 'heteronomous' ethical principles (such as the pursuit of happiness) towards an understanding of what 'autonomy' of the will really involves.

Odysseus reminds himself that he is an aristocrat, and thereby resolves his doubts how he should conduct himself in a critical situation. He does it by concentrating on the thought that he belongs to a certain social order, and that it is his duty to fulfil the 'virtue' of that order. The universal which underlies the predication 'I am a noble' is the group; he does not reflect on an abstract 'good' but upon the circle of which he claims membership. It is the same as if an officer were to say: 'As an officer I must do this or that,' thus gauging his action by the rigid conception of honour peculiar to his caste. (Snell (1960), 159)

What is missing from Odysseus' deliberation, in Snell's view, is an understanding that a genuinely moral decision involves binding oneself to universal principles, as distinct from the ethic of one's own group or community. Snell reinforces this view by an interpretation of the key evaluative terms of Odysseus' deliberation as being narrowly class-based rather than ethical in a broader sense.³² But his main point, here as elsewhere, is that we do not find a recognition of the requirement, for a properly moral decision, that the agent's exercise of the 'good will' should involve an independent act of universalization. Kantian themes are less apparent in Snell's earlier discussions of Homeric decision-making (1928; 1930), in which the key point is the absence of self-consciousness of one's role as a deciding agent. But it is probable that, here too, Kantian considerations bear on his understanding of what it is to make a 'genuine personal' decision, that is, a decision which is genuinely 'one's own'. In ruling out decisions which are based on strong emotional reactions (such as Achilles' in *Il.* 18. 97–100), or on 'external factors' (such as are operative in Odysseus' decision in *Il.* 11. 404–10), he rules out the kind of decisions which would not, on the Kantian view, express the autonomy, or self-legislation, of the will. The insistence on decisions which are free of such factors, and which are taken, self-consciously, as the agent's 'own', may reflect some of Kant's preconditions for moral decisions, even though the requirement of universalization is not explicit here.³³

In Adkins's case, the centrality of Kant was made plain in his famous—or notorious—announcement in the Preface to *Merit and*

³² On the interpretation of the meaning of *kakoi* and *aristeuein* (*Il.* 11. 408–9), see 1.3 below, esp. text to nn. 131–2.

³³ See Snell (1928), 60–3, (1930), 142–3, 149–50; on the negative aspect of Kantian moral freedom (i.e. freedom from non-universalized desires and inclinations), see Kant, *ML*, pp. 115–18, and Hill (1989), 97.

Responsibility (1960) that, in our moral thinking, 'we are all Kantians now' (p. 2). For Snell, Kantian presuppositions about morality are combined with a Hegelian picture of human civilization as embodying an inner historico-cultural drive towards self-consciousness.³⁴ Adkins combines Kantian presuppositions with a rather different anthropological or sociological approach. His main project in *Merit and Responsibility* (1960) seems to be to explain the features of Greek cultural life that prevented them, except in an incomplete way, from acquiring the Kantian moral conceptions that he takes as normative.³⁵ In *From the Many to the One* (1970), he offers a parallel line of explanation for the failure (as he sees it) of Greek culture to provide the conditions in which people can develop full psychological unity and stability; and in which they can understand what this involves. The general line of thought, though nowhere spelled out fully, seems to be this. Only in a culture in which people are judged by their intentions (the quality of their will) rather than by the success and failure of their actions can they achieve full psychological unity. In such a culture, people identify themselves with the 'I' who is the unitary locus of consciousness and will and the bearer of value. By contrast, Greece remained a 'results culture' from Homer to Aristotle and beyond, to some extent, in which people were judged by the success and failure of their actions rather than by the quality of their will. The presentation of deliberation, from Homer to Aristotle, in terms of the calculation of 'external' advantages and of the interplay of psychological forces, shows that the conception of an 'I' who is the locus of the autonomous will has not yet been reached. Thus, for Adkins too, Kantian assumptions about the character of a properly moral response play a crucial role in determining his understanding

³⁴ There is a latent conflict between Snell's explicit Hegelianism and his implicit Kantianism, since Hegel famously criticizes Kant's moral theory. In particular, Hegel criticizes Kant's focus on the universalizing individual moral agent (*Moralität*) and his neglect of communal ethics (*Sittlichkeit*), in a way that anticipates modern anti-Kantians such as MacIntyre; see e.g. C. Taylor (1975), 375–8, and, on MacIntyre, 1.3 below, text to nn. 110–12. However, this conflict is not recognized by Snell, and is, in any case, mitigated by the fact that Snell focuses on Hegel's ideas about the historico-cultural development of self-consciousness, rather than his communal conception of ethics.

³⁵ See Adkins (1960), 1–9. Compare the intellectual framework of Snell and Adkins with that of Durkheim and Mauss, as analysed by Collins (1985), who shows how their anthropological approach evolves out of their responses to post-Kantian theory. Mauss (1985), 20–3, first published in 1938, is strikingly close to Snell's kind of developmentalism.

of the nature, and the relative defectiveness, of Homeric and Aristotelian models of practical and ethical reasoning.³⁶

1.2 HOMERIC MODELS OF PRACTICAL REASONING

In responding to the comments of Snell and Adkins on Homeric deliberation, the crucial point is that we should not simply accept their psychological and ethical presuppositions, and question their reading of the Homeric material, but that we should question those presuppositions. In fact, the norms that they presuppose (the post-Cartesian conception of self and the post-Kantian conception of morality) have been questioned widely in the philosophy of mind and ethics.³⁷ Some of these criticisms of dominant modern ideas have been linked with reassessments of Greek models of practical reasoning and ethical motivation; and it is this line of thought that I develop here. I take note, especially, of certain recent philosophical discussions which can help us to make better sense of the patterns of practical reasoning and ethical motivation in Homer, and to see more clearly the relationship between Homeric and Greek philosophical patterns. I discuss practical reasoning in this section and ethical motivation in the next. In each section, I focus on the four deliberative monologues in the *Iliad* as a way of exemplifying the consequences of interpreting the Greek material in the light of a different psychological and ethical framework from that presupposed by Snell and Adkins.

If you move from reading Snell and Adkins to the contemporary theory of mind, what is immediately striking is that those concepts whose absence these scholars note in Homer are precisely those whose validity is widely questioned by many contemporary theorists. I am thinking especially of the Cartesian idea of the 'person' as the locus of a unitary self-conscious 'I', whose actions are to be understood as the results of conscious volitions or acts of will. I take particular note of Kathleen Wilkes's (1988) claims, together with those made by Peter Smith and O. R. Jones in their

³⁶ See Adkins (1970), refs. in n. 16 above, and quotations cited on p. 33 above from (1970), 24 and 195. Adkins sees in Stoicism and Epicureanism a studied reaction against the ethos of the results-culture, but not one which enables the recognition of psychological unity (as he conceives this), 237–8, 259–60. I am not implying that Kant's thinking involves the conception of the 'I' presented here; on his theory of the 'transcendental I', see Collins (1985), 55–8, Kitcher (1984).

³⁷ See *Introd.*, text to nn. 21–30.

lucid introduction to the philosophy of mind (1986). Both books are based on a 'functionalist' approach to human psychology. But the reaction against the Cartesian model of the mind is shared by many contemporary theories, as well as, of course, by long-standing anti-Cartesian theories such as Freud's.³⁸ There are two related strands in their arguments which are relevant here: their critique of the Cartesian picture of the agent as a locus of consciousness and will, and their alternative framework for understanding human action. As regards consciousness, their principal claim is that this notion is both more complex, and more incoherent, than it is taken to be in Cartesian theory;³⁹ correspondingly, it provides a weak basis on which to ground an account of mind and personal agency. In particular, they argue that the Cartesian assumption that we have a direct and authoritative access to all our mental states does not stand up against commonsense objections or the findings of scientific research.⁴⁰ If we accept their arguments, it follows that there are serious problems with the Cartesian idea that 'I' am to be identified with a unitary locus of consciousness, and also with Locke's idea of the 'person' as one who is conscious of himself as a centre of consciousness.⁴¹ For related reasons, these contemporary writers are critical of the idea that the first-personal viewpoint has the kind of privileged and authoritative status claimed for it in the post-Cartesian theory of mind and of personal identity. If there is a good deal about my psychological states of which I am not directly conscious, there is no reason to give the first-personal viewpoint this special status.

Smith and Jones write from a broadly 'functionalist' position, a key feature of which is that psychological processes are treated as

³⁸ e.g. in cognitive psychology a key concern is with modes of mental 'representation' and of communicating the 'content' of mental states (both conscious and non-conscious), see further Wilkes (1988), 190–1 and refs. in Sorabji (1990), 308 n. 5. On Freud and the Cartesian model of mind, see 4.2 below, text to nn. 48–52; on functionalism, see text to n. 42 below.

³⁹ Among their arguments are these: (1) 'consciousness' includes both sentience and consciousness *that* *x* or *y* is the case; and (2) both kinds of consciousness are not 'all or nothing states' (in an image common in post-Cartesian theory, a light that is either on or off) but matters of degree. See further Smith and Jones (1986), ch. 15; Wilkes (1988), ch. 6.

⁴⁰ In commonsense terms, we are not conscious of *all* the mental processes we are engaged in at any one time (many of which we perform half-consciously or unconsciously); nor are we conscious at the time of *all* the mental states (e.g. beliefs and desires) that bear on our actions at that time.

⁴¹ See refs. in 1.1 above, esp. text to nn. 18–19.

functional components of an organic (or inorganic) system, and not as constituting a distinct category (that of the 'mental') as in Cartesian theory. However, the kind of functionalism that they adopt does not involve replacing explanation of action in psychological terms by explanation in physical or physiological terms.⁴² Correspondingly, in their approach to motivation, they draw on the principles of contemporary action-theory, especially as developed by Donald Davidson, according to which an agent's reasons for a given action are treated as providing a proper causal explanation for that action.⁴³ The typical pattern of explanation, in this theory, is stated in terms of a combination of beliefs and desires. But the theory does not presuppose that the beliefs and desires which constitute the reasons for a given action are necessarily conscious to the agent, either prior to the action or subsequently. (Beliefs and desires are, thus, not equivalent to conscious 'acts of will' in the volitionist theory.) The explanation lies in the fact that the actions concerned can be understood by reference to the agent's beliefs and desires, and not by reference to the fact that the agent is conscious of them.⁴⁴

These features of the contemporary philosophy of mind would be relevant here if they simply invited us to call into question the Cartesian presuppositions of the accounts of Homeric and Aristotelian deliberations given by Snell and Adkins. But they are also of value because they suggest alternative ways of interpreting the Greek models, in which these emerge as valid and coherent rather than as primitive and defective (as they seem on the post-Cartesian view). This line of thought has been developed especially in connection with Aristotle. Aristotle is commended by some current theorists because, instead of focusing on 'mind', as conceived in Cartesian thought, namely as the locus of subjective or introspective experience, he sets out to study the modes of 'life' (*psyche*) which actualize the essential capacities of complex natural kinds (human

⁴² See further Smith and Jones (1986), chs. 6, 11–13, esp. 171–3. (For a functionalist model of mind and consciousness, couched in terms of psychological functions, see Dennett (1979), ch. 9.) Their version of functionalism is thus similar to those cognitive theories which analyse the relationship of mental states to each other by reference to their 'content' rather than the alleged physical counterpart of those states; see n. 38 above.

⁴³ Davidson challenged the prevailing assumption that an agent's reasons for acting are distinct from the causes which explain that action (those causes being understood, typically, in mechanistic terms).

⁴⁴ See Smith and Jones (1986), chs. 9 and 17; Davidson (1980), chs. 1–3; LePore and McLaughlin (1985), 3–13.

beings, beasts, etc.).⁴⁵ Human psychological capacities are regarded as being more complex or sophisticated versions of capacities, such as perception and memory, partly shared by other species, and not as different in kind (that is, conscious rather than non-conscious) as they are in Cartesian theory. Thus, Wilkes, for instance, draws attention to Aristotle's comment that 'choice is either desiderative reason or ratiocinative desire, and such a source of action is a man'.⁴⁶ She contrasts favourably the approach exemplified here with that in modern theories of personal identity in which capacities such as sense-perception and pain, which are not distinctively human (or especially complex), are given undue emphasis by the subjective approach of the post-Cartesian theory of mind.

Aristotle's analysis of motivation has been of special interest to those developing action-theory; this is especially true of his analysis of (human and non-human) motivation in logical terms by means of the 'practical syllogism'. Elizabeth Anscombe saw this procedure as valuable because it enabled Aristotle to display the reasons for an action without necessarily attributing them to an agent as conscious intentions:

if Aristotle's account [the practical syllogism] were supposed to describe actual mental processes, it would in general be quite absurd. The interest of the account is that it describes an order which is there whenever actions are done with intentions [that is, when actions are performed about which we can intelligibly ask why they were performed].⁴⁷

Whether Anscombe is right to think that Aristotle's account does not generally describe 'actual mental processes' is open to question.⁴⁸ But it is, certainly, striking that Anscombe finds Aristotle's model valuable for precisely the same reason that leads Adkins to find it defective. Adkins criticizes the Aristotelian model of motivation, including the practical syllogism, because it presents decisions as based on reasons rather than on conscious acts of will by a unitary 'I';⁴⁹ Anscombe finds Aristotle's model valuable for the same reason. Con-

⁴⁵ See Wilkes (1988), 209–14; Smith and Jones (1986), ch. 6; also Gill (1991), 169–71. In Greek, 'psyche' (*psuche*), standardly signifies 'life' as well as 'psychological functions' or the locus of these. See further, on psyche in early Greek thought, Claus (1981), and, in Aristotle, Lear (1988), 96–101.

⁴⁶ Arist. *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) 6. 2, 1139^b4–5, cited by Wilkes (1988), 213, her tr. and italics; see also Wilkes, 212, and 183–92.

⁴⁷ Anscombe (1957), 79.

⁴⁸ See below, text to n. 76.

⁴⁹ See Adkins (1970), 195, and 1.1 above, pp. 33–4.

siderations similar to those which have influenced Anscombe have led Davidson (like Aristotle) to deploy the practical syllogism in the analysis of *akrasia*. The crucial point about the belief-and-desire patterns which he analyses is not that they are conscious but that they serve to explain the agent's behaviour.⁵⁰ Intellectual influences have run in two different directions on this question. The emergence of action-theory has led scholars to place ancient philosophical issues in a new conceptual framework, and to attribute to Aristotle, or the Stoics, a 'philosophy of action'.⁵¹ Changing intellectual fashion has, no doubt, played a part in this process (and such changes have an independent interest for this study).⁵² But the idea that it is *merely* change of intellectual fashion that is involved can scarcely survive a reading of, for instance, David Charles's detailed and penetrating study of Aristotle's account of *akrasia*, a study formulated in terms of contemporary action-theory, but yielding a depth of understanding of Aristotle's account not previously available.⁵³ It is on the insights of such studies that I draw here, in seeking to elucidate the patterns of thinking about human action embodied in Homeric deliberation.

Recently, these developments in the theory of mind have been introduced into the debate about Homeric deliberation. Richard Gaskin, for instance, has used criteria of agency based on these developments to dispute Snell's claim that Homeric figures do not make genuine personal decisions because they are not conscious of making 'their own' decisions as acts of will. He takes issue, especially, with Snell's claim that Odysseus' deliberation, in *Il.* 11. 404–10, does not constitute a genuine decision because it is based on (what Snell regards as) 'external' considerations, those relating to Odysseus' status in his society:

But action which is chosen for reasons [i.e. Odysseus' type of action] is the only genuine sort of action we know: we have no other model. Agents

⁵⁰ At least, they go as far as any reasons can go to explain a phenomenon which Davidson finds, ultimately, 'surd'; Davidson (1980), 21–42, esp. 42; see also refs. in n. 44 above.

⁵¹ See Charles (1984), Inwood (1985); see also Nussbaum (1978), 165–220, Irwin (1988), ch. 15.

⁵² Change of intellectual fashion helps to shape the kind of 'dialogue' that we have with the Greek material, and this (as I suggest, *Introd.*, text to n. 49) may enable us to 'hear' certain features of Greek thinking more clearly at one time than at another.

⁵³ See Charles (1984), chs. 3–4; and, on his methodology, pp. ix–x. Contrast the deeply unsympathetic (and correspondingly unilluminating) treatment of this topic by Adkins (1960), 190–5.

perform actions *for reasons*. There is no suggestion here that reasons mechanically determine action—that is not a convincing model of human agency—but equally there is no *gap* between the reasons for an action and the action, in the sense that an action is performed for its reasons and *for nothing else*; the reasons *and nothing else* rationalise [i.e. make rational sense of] the action.⁵⁴

Gaskin does not couch his argument in terms of the opposition between different intellectual traditions but of commonsense objections to Snell's criteria for a genuine decision. But he makes plain that his objections are informed by contemporary theories of action;⁵⁵ and his objections are, in effect, to the post-Cartesian (and post-Kantian) presuppositions that underlie Snell's criteria for genuine decisions.⁵⁶ I develop a similar line of approach to Homeric deliberation shortly; like Gaskin, I think that the topic raises issues about the character of distinctively human motivation, and that the discussion of this issue is advanced by underlining the similarities in psychological framework between Homer and (among other Greek thinkers) Aristotle.⁵⁷

Out of the complex of ways in which the Homeric poems present deliberation and decision-making, I focus here on the four deliberative monologues which occur in battle-scenes in the *Iliad*.⁵⁸ I do not select them for special attention in the belief that here, if anywhere in Homer, we can find 'inner' deliberation and 'autonomous' decisions.⁵⁹ To do so would run counter to the whole thrust of my

⁵⁴ Gaskin (1990), 7, his italics. For a similar dismissal of the demand for a volitionist model of action, see Williams (1993), 35–6, linked with the dismissal of a demand for a Kantian conception of the moral will (41–2), which he takes to be implied in the accounts of Homeric deliberation given by Snell and Adkins.

⁵⁵ The position that Gaskin seems to have in view is a form of cognitivism (p. 5), but it is one which clearly has a good deal in common with Davidson's type of action-theory: see his nn. 4, 27, and 34.

⁵⁶ Gaskin seems to miss the Kantian dimension in Snell's position (and that of Voigt), and to see their criteria for genuine decisions as existentialist: see his pp. 7–8, and his analogous criticism of Wiggins and Williams on p. 15 (esp. n. 38).

⁵⁷ See Gaskin (1990), 10–12.

⁵⁸ *Il.* 11. 403–10, 17. 90–105, 21. 552–70, 22. 98–130. The monologues are also studied, from a different standpoint, in Fenik (1978a). Achilles has three non-deliberative monologues: 18. 6–14, 20. 343–53, 21. 53–64, on which see Scully (1984), 19–20. On deliberative patterns in general in Homer, see Voigt (1934); Russo (1968), 289–95; Sharples (1983); Scully (1984); and, on divine-human interaction, Lesky (1961).

⁵⁹ If this were my aim, I would focus on deliberation (including deliberative monologues) in *Od.*, in which it is customary to see a more developed understanding of

argument. I take it that the patterns of practical reasoning expressed in the monologues can also be found in collective deliberation, in dialogues between human beings, between gods, or (as in the famous dialogue between Achilles and Athena in *Il.* 1) between human being and god.⁶⁰ Also, as I bring out, the monologues represent, in different ways, an internalization of the content and patterns of interpersonal discourse.⁶¹ I focus on the four monologues because they constitute a limited sample of Homeric deliberation, by reference to which we can define, in a relatively fine-grained way, the patterns (and variations within the patterns) of practical reasoning and ethical motivation.

A further reason for examining the deliberative monologues is that they lend themselves to comparison with later Greek philosophical models of practical reasoning, particularly those of Aristotle and the Stoics. The degree to which they are comparable is striking, and suggests that (apart from other kinds of cultural continuity) the Homeric monologues may have helped to shape philosophical ways of thinking about deliberation. The idea embodied in the form of the Homeric monologues that the formation of judgements, or decisions, is the outcome of an internal dialogue, involving affirmation or assent, is a common one from Plato onwards.⁶² In the Aristotelian and Stoic versions of this idea (the practical syllogism, and the idea that rational action involves 'assent'), we find the combination of internal dialogue and inferential reasoning which is characteristic of the Homeric pattern also. Given the massively important role of

human autonomy; see e.g. Russo (1968), 288–95. (On *Od.* 20. 18–21, see 3.2 below.) Focusing on examples from *Il.* (the less 'developed' poem) enables me to raise the question of the character of Homeric deliberation in its most acute form.

⁶⁰ For analysis of one of the many instances of collective deliberation in Homer, esp. *Il.*, see Schofield (1986), 22–4, on *Il.* 14. 37–134; also, more generally, Havelock (1978), chs. 6–7. Deliberative formulae (e.g. 'he/they wondered whether . . . whether . . .') can occur in connection with collective deliberation (*Il.* 18. 510–13, 22. 174–6) and person–person discussion (16. 435–8) as well as in cases of individual deliberation. Deliberation functions in similar ways at the divine and human level; also, when human deliberation is aided by divine dialogue (see e.g. *Il.* 1. 188–222, 10. 503–14, 16. 712–25), the gods can be seen as giving the human beings *a reason* to act in a given way: see esp. *Il.* 1. 212–14.

⁶¹ On the significance of the fact that the deliberative monologues are couched in the form of internalized *dialogue*, see Dodds (1951), 16; Russo and Simon (1968); Claus (1981), 39–41; see also text to nn. 62, 92, 98–9 below. On the ethical content of the monologues, see 1.3–4 below.

⁶² See Pl. *Theaetetus* 189e–190a, *Sophist* 263e–264b, *Philebus* 38c–e, and n. 92 below.

Homer (and to a lesser extent of Greek poetic modes generally) in shaping Greek philosophical patterns of thought,⁶³ the resemblance may indicate some degree of influence as well as continuity.

Troubled, [Odysseus] spoke to his own great-hearted spirit: 'Ah me, what is going to happen to me? It will be very bad if I run away, frightened of their numbers. But it will be more terrible if I am caught here on my own, now that the son of Cronus has made the rest of the Greeks run away. But why does my spirit debate this with me? I know that it is cowards who leave the fight, but whoever is to be best in battle must stand his ground strongly, whether he is hit or hits someone else.' (Il. 11. 403-10)

Troubled, [Menelaus] spoke to his own great-hearted spirit: 'Ah me; if I abandon the beautiful armour, and Patroclus, who is lying dead here for the sake of my honour, I am frightened that one of the Greeks who sees it will be indignant at me. But if I go on my own to meet Hector and fight with the Trojans out of shame, I am frightened that they will surround me, many against one; Hector with his shining helmet leads all the Trojans here. But why does my spirit debate this with me? When a man, in the face of divine opposition, wants to fight with someone else who is honoured by a god, a big disaster soon rolls down on him. So surely none of the Greeks will be indignant, when he sees me giving way to Hector, who fights with divine help. But at least if I could find out where Ajax of the great war-cry is, both of us could come back and renew our battle-spirit, even in the face of divine opposition, in the hope of dragging the corpse [of Patroclus] back to Achilles, son of Peleus. That would be the best of bad things.' (Il. 17. 90-105)

Troubled, [Agenor] spoke to his own great-hearted spirit: 'Ah me! If I run away from powerful Achilles in the same way that the others are driven headlong in terror, he will catch me even so and cut my throat, since I am too weak to stop him. But if I let these others be driven headlong by Achilles, son of Peleus, and run away from the city-wall in another direction to the plain of Ilion, until I reach the ridges of Ida, and take cover in the undergrowth, then in the evening, when I have bathed in the river, and washed off the sweat, I could come to Ilion. But why does my spirit debate this with me? I am frightened that he will see me starting to go to the plain from the city, and chase and catch me with his swift feet. Then there will no longer be any way to escape death and the fates. He is too strong, stronger than everyone else. But if I go out in front of the city and stand against him, surely even his skin can be wounded by sharp bronze. He has only one life, and people say that he is mortal; it is just that Zeus, the son of Cronus, is giving him glory.' (Il. 21. 552-70)

⁶³ See further below text to nn. 92-7, 101-4; more generally, 3.1, 3.6, 4.7.

Troubled, [Hector] spoke to his own great-hearted spirit: 'Ah me! If I go inside the gates and the city-walls, Polydamas will be first to place blame on me, who told me to lead the Trojans to the city during this last deadly night, when godlike Achilles was roused up. But I did not take any notice of him, though it would have been much better if I had. But now, since I have destroyed the people by my recklessness, I feel shame before the Trojans and the Trojan women with their trailing dresses, and am frightened that someone who is worse than me will say: 'Hector relied on his own strength and destroyed the people.' This is what they will say; and in that case it would be much better to go to meet Achilles and either kill him and come back or be killed by him nobly in defence of the city.

But if I put down my embossed shield and strong helmet, and lean my shield against the city-wall, and go as I am to meet excellent Achilles, and promise to give back Helen and her possessions, all that Alexander brought to Troy in the hollow ships, which was the beginning of the quarrel, for the sons of Atreus to take away, and to let the Greeks divide up the rest of the property stored in this city; and then also, if I later make the Trojans, meeting in council, take an oath that they will not hide anything, but will distribute all the possessions that the lovely city contains within it—but why does my spirit debate this with me? I am frightened that, if I go and approach him as a suppliant, he will not pity me or respect my situation, but will kill me, in my nakedness, like a woman, once I have taken off my armour. It is impossible now to whisper to him from a tree or rock like a girl and a young man, a girl and a young man whispering to each other. It is better to drive it to a fight as soon as I can; let us see to which one of us the Olympian gives the right to boast.' (Il. 22. 98-130)

As we read the monologues, keeping in mind the issues that I have discussed, an initial response may be that Snell and Adkins, on the one hand, and Gaskin and Williams, on the other, have (from very different standpoints) described correctly the character of Homeric deliberation. What the monologues present are the reasons that lead the figures to act in the way they do. Over and above the statement and shaping of the reasons, there is no explicit indication that the figure sees himself as taking a decision (or as exercising his will) or that he sees himself as a unitary 'I' and locus of will.⁶⁴ However, there are two additional features in the presentation of the reasons that may also seem striking. One is the extent to which the deliberative process involves inferential reasoning of various kinds, particularly that involved in working out the implications of different

⁶⁴ See 1.1 above, text to nn. 11-12, 16, 24-6; and text to n. 54 above.

courses of action. Another is that the monologues exhibit the same basic structure (conveyed through formulaic lines) in which the figure first entertains and then rejects a certain course of action; and the rejection is a crucial preliminary to the reaching of a conclusion. To try to provide an explanatory framework for understanding the psychological model embodied here, I refer to Aristotelian and Stoic accounts of motivation,⁶⁵ and especially to their specifications for distinctively human (or rational) patterns of motivation. As already indicated, I think that some contemporary discussions in the theory of mind can help us to discern those features of the Greek philosophical theories that are relevant here.

In the contemporary theory of action, actions are sometimes explained not by the fact that they are preceded by conscious acts of will but by combinations of belief-and-desire which render the action intelligible, and which are regarded as constituting the causes of the action in question.⁶⁶ The Aristotelian and Stoic models seem to imply a view of the same general type. The force of Aristotle's use of the practical syllogism to explain action is that the relevant action 'follows' from the way that the agent interprets his situation, in the same way that a conclusion follows from the relevant premisses. Brad Inwood summarizes in this way one version of Aristotle's method of analysis: 'The two premisses of the practical syllogism (one described as "through the good", the other as "through the possible") represent, respectively, the desiderative state of the animal and the information it gets from thought or perception about the possibility of fulfilling that desire.' Aristotle himself puts it this way: "I have to drink", says appetite; "Here's drink", says perception or imagination [*phantasia*] or thought; at once he drinks. In this way, animals are impelled to move and act; desire is the last cause of movement, and this occurs either through perception or imagination or thought."⁶⁷

Analogously, the Stoics explain action by reference to the idea that an 'impression' (*phantasia*) generates an impulse (*horme*). The idea is, roughly, that the agent interprets his situation as involving some feature which is good, and it is this which causes the positive

⁶⁵ The general similarities between Aristotelian and Stoic thinking on this subject are well-recognized: see e.g. Inwood (1985), chs. 1–2.

⁶⁶ See text to n. 44 above.

⁶⁷ See Inwood (1985), 14, and Arist. *De Motu Animalium* (MA) 701^a32–6 and context; also Charles (1984), 84–96.

response.⁶⁸ In general terms, this kind of model of motivation seems to underlie the presentation of the Homeric monologues as a prelude to (and explanation of) action. The type of action taken in each case (that of standing one's ground or giving way) follows naturally—or logically—from the reasoning presented in the monologue, and from the conclusion reached, explicitly or implicitly, about the desirability of the course of action involved.⁶⁹ No further indication is required (such as 'I decide to *x*' or 'he decided to *x*'), since the motivation for the action is already explained adequately.

However, to pursue this line of thought further, we need to bring closer together the formulations of the Homeric monologues and Greek philosophical thinking about the distinctive character of human, or rational, motivation. This is not as simple as it might seem, because in Greek, as in contemporary thinking, the nature of the boundary between human and non-human animal psychology (and between human and non-human forms of rationality) was a matter of some considerable debate.⁷⁰ I offer some suggestions on this topic which I think are defensible, though I do not try to defend them fully here.⁷¹

In contemporary thinking, a position sometimes adopted is that human beings, but not non-human animals, have propositional attitudes (such as, the belief *that x* is the case and the desire *that y* be the case); and that this fact is crucial for our understanding of human and non-human motivation. Although we may appropriately explain non-human motivation in terms of belief-and-desire patterns, it is only in the case of human beings that the form of explanation corresponds to the type of mental processes involved. This view is sometimes combined with the thought that human distinctiveness in this respect is connected with the use of language. The use of language both enables, and expresses, the capacity of human beings to structure their psychological experience in a way that corresponds

⁶⁸ See Long and Sedley (1987) (= LS) 53A(4), and vol. 1, 239–41; also Inwood (1985), 51–9.

⁶⁹ Il. 11. 411–60; Odysseus stands his ground while being surrounded (see 407–10); 17. 107–15, Menelaus retreats and looks for Ajax to help him (see 97–105). 21. 571–89, Agenor waits for Achilles (see 562–70); in Hector's case, the ambivalent nature of his response (he first stands his ground, then runs away, 22. 131–66) seems to reflect, in part, the weak motivational basis provided for standing his ground in 99–130; see further 1.3–4 below.

⁷⁰ See Sorabji (1993), part 1.

⁷¹ See further Gill (1991).

to that of having beliefs and desires *that x is/be the case*.⁷² There are indications in both Aristotelian and Stoic systems of similar lines of thought. In their theories, too, there are grounds for holding that it is only in the case of human beings that the propositional attitudes used to explain motivation correspond fully to the mental (though not necessarily conscious) processes involved in motivation. There are grounds too for connecting this idea with the fact that human beings alone are capable of using language, and of structuring their mental processes in the form of propositional attitudes.⁷³

But it is important to be clear about their reasons for holding this view. The crucial mark of human rationality for them is not so much language-use as such, or the structuring of mental processes in a form that answers to linguistic forms (for instance, having *propositional* attitudes). It is rather that of the ability to conceptualize (to structure one's responses in terms of universal concepts), and—a capacity implied by conceptualization—the ability to *reason*, to make inferences and draw conclusions. The acquisition of language is closely bound up with the development of these abilities; but these are the more fundamental abilities, and their exercise pervades all forms of human experience.⁷⁴ It follows, then, that the Aristotelian and Stoic models of motivation apply differently to human and non-human animals because the inferential and conceptual structure of the models corresponds (or, at least, corresponds more closely) to the actual mental processes of human beings.⁷⁵ It would seem also to follow that the specimens of syllogistic reasoning given by Aristotle, for instance, correspond (though, doubtless, in a highly schematized form) to the actual thought-processes of human beings. This view is supported by the fact that Aristotle also analyses deliberation

⁷² This is the position of Davidson (1985b); for different positions on the same issue, see Dennett (1976), 179–89, and Jeffrey (1985).

⁷³ See e.g. Arist. *De Sensu* 473^a11–17, *De Anima* (DA) 428^a19–24; LS 33C and I; also Inwood (1985), 56–66, and Long (1971a). However, Sorabji argues for a sharper contrast between the Stoic and Aristotelian positions, suggesting that, for the Stoics, as for Dennett (1976), 179–89, animal impressions are propositional in so far as they lend themselves to analysis in propositional form, even though they are not so conceived by the animals themselves. See Sorabji (1990), 309–14; (1991), 203–6; (1993), 20–8.

⁷⁴ See Arist. *Metaphysics* (*Metaph.*) 980^b25–981^a1, NE 1147^b4–5, DA 434^a5–9; LS 53I; and Gill (1991), 176–83, 186–92.

⁷⁵ However, to use the model at all in the case of non-human animals, it would seem that we need to attribute to them simpler, but functionally analogous, processes: see, on Aristotle, Irwin (1988), 322–5, and, for the stronger claim about the Stoics made by Sorabji, refs. in n. 73 above.

(*bouleusis*), which certainly does correspond to such thought-processes, in syllogistic, and in highly schematic, terms.⁷⁶

This leads us back to the Homeric monologues; as noted earlier, one of their most striking features is the extent to which they contain not simply reasons for acting but also inferential *reasoning*. Much of this is of a means–end type; but two examples seem to fall rather into the rule–case type, in which the present case is placed into a general class.⁷⁷ Odysseus applies to his own case the general principle that 'whoever is to be best in battle must stand his ground strongly' (Il. 11. 409–10). Menelaus, in a similar way, guides his action by the thought that: 'When a man . . . wants to fight with someone else who is honoured by a god, a big disaster soon rolls down on him' (17. 98–9). The fact that the two speakers do not make explicit the relevance of the general principles to their own case (the kind of fact taken by Snell as evidence of the lack of a self-conscious, choosing 'I')⁷⁸ coincides, interestingly, with a point made by Aristotle in connection with the use of the practical syllogism to explain motivation: 'As sometimes happens when we ask dialectical questions, so here the intellect [*dianoia*] does not stop and consider at all the second proposition, the obvious one; for example, if walking is good for a human being, one does not spend time thinking "I am a human being"'.⁷⁹ More typically, however, the reasoning of the monologues is of a means–end type, or, at least, of a type which is related to this. Aristotle's analyses of this type of reasoning (which he regards as the classic form of deliberation) bring out its inferential character and the links with rule–case or class–case reasoning:

The healthy subject, then, is produced as a result of the following train of thought; since *this* is health, if the subject is to be healthy *this* must first be present, e.g. a uniform state of body, and if this is to be present, there must be heat, and the physician goes on thinking thus until he brings the matter to a final step which he himself can take.

⁷⁶ Here I follow Charles (1984), 136–7, and Nussbaum (1978), 174 and 207–8, as against Cooper (1975), 46–7, and Anscombe (1957), 79, cited earlier (n. 47 above).

⁷⁷ For a listing of the two types in Aristotle, see Charles (1984), 262. Both of them can be seen as subdivisions of the categories 'through the good' (major premiss) and 'through the possible' (minor premiss) specified in Arist. MA 701^a23–5.

⁷⁸ See e.g. Snell (1930), 144–5, discussing Il. 11. 403–10; and 1.1 above, text to nn. 11–12 above.

⁷⁹ MA 701^a25–8. Aristotle's example here is sometimes found improbable; but the Homeric parallels suggest that it exemplifies an intelligible type of phenomenon.

Having set the end [those deliberating] consider how and by what means it is to be attained; and if it seems to be produced by several means they consider by which it is most easily and best produced, while if it is achieved by one only they consider how it will be achieved by this and by what means *this* will be achieved, till they come to the first cause, which in the order of discovery is last.⁸⁰

The deliberation of the Homeric monologues does not take this form (unsurprisingly, given the situation in which the speakers find themselves), but one which is analogically related to it. The speakers work out the likely consequences of available courses of action (in the process, establishing whether those courses of action are really available),⁸¹ and evaluate them in the light of explicit or implied goals. The markedly syllogistic form of Aristotle's accounts of deliberation is partly anticipated by the typical formulation of the Homeric reasoning: 'if I do *x*, then *y* will happen, and this involves *z*, which is good or bad'.⁸² The evaluation is expressed in adjectives ('bad', 'better', 'worse', 'best of evil'), or phrases which imply similar evaluations. The goal or end, by reference to which evaluation occurs, is—to put it rather generally—avoiding death without acting dishonourably and without incurring the disgrace that this involves. But, as we see later, there are variations in the way, and the extent, to which the deliberation reflects this goal.⁸³ As these comments imply, part of the desired goal may be coextensive with the 'means',

⁸⁰ *Metaph.* 1032^b6–9 (the first passage); the process involved here is that of 'making' (*poiesis*), but it is very similar to deliberation, as described in *NE* 1112^b15–20 (the second passage). Both passages tr. Barnes (1984).

⁸¹ See *Il.* 21. 563–6, 22. 122–8; also *Arist. NE* 1112^a30–1, 1112^b24–31.

⁸² For this pattern, see *Il.* 17. 91–3, 94–6, 102–5; 21. 553–5, 556–66 (interrupted at 562), 567–70; 22. 99–110, 111–28 (interrupted at 122), 129–30. In 11. 404–6, the pattern occurs in a more abbreviated form, the act, consequences, and evaluations being compressed into two conditional statements.

⁸³ Thus, in *Il.* 11. 404, 'bad' (*kakon*), cf. what 'cowards' (*kakoi*) do, 408 signifies dishonourable action, as distinct from the action of one who is 'to be best' (*aristeuein*) 409, while 'more terrible' (*deioteron*), literally 'what makes me shudder more', 405, signifies action likely to produce death (see also 1.3 below, text to nn. 130–2). In 17. 91–105, lines 91–7 contrast potentially shameful and dangerous (but shame-avoiding) activities, while lines 98–105 argue that avoiding death in such a case is not shameful, and recommend an alternative course of action as 'best of bad things' (*kakon ... phertaton*), 105. In 21. 533–70, the likelihood of death, as a consequence of the actions considered, is explicit in 555 and 565; and so standing one's ground is selected as offering the only chance of avoiding death (567–70). In 22. 99–110, one course of action is seen as both dishonourable and bringing disgrace; in 111–28, another is considered, and rejected, as possibly avoiding death; thus, standing one's ground is selected as 'better' (*belteron*), 129.

or course of action considered, namely acting honourably; and, on this point too, the Homeric monologues bear out a point often emphasized in discussions of Aristotle's analysis of means–end deliberation.⁸⁴

In these respects especially, the Homeric monologues can be seen as exemplifying—or prefiguring—Aristotle's specifications of the types of rationality that are characteristic of developed human beings. For instance, the Homeric monologues exhibit the sense of time (the ability to weigh the advantages of future courses of action, and the sense of one's own past) that Aristotle regards as exclusive to human animals, and as making a significant difference to the way that they form desires.⁸⁵ This point bears on a feature of Aristotle's thinking stressed by some recent scholars: the idea that (adult) human beings can deliberate as creatures who see themselves as living a *life* (and a life of a certain kind and quality); and that their means–end deliberation reflects this fact.⁸⁶ This idea is implied in at least two of the monologues; but to say this is not to say that we also find deliberation here *about* the goals of one's life.⁸⁷ Relatedly, we also find exemplified the preferential reasoning that Aristotle takes to be characteristic of human beings,⁸⁸ and which, in its higher forms, constitutes the basis for preferential choice or decision (*prohairesis*). Although Aristotle takes the ability to make such choices as the mark of developed human rationality, the form of explanation for action provided is essentially the same as for simpler human (and animal) responses. The action is explained by a more complex version of the belief-and-desire (or thought-and-desire)

⁸⁴ See esp. *Il.* 11. 408–10; on the point in Aristotle, see e.g. Wiggins (1980a), 222–7; Sherman (1989), 70–5.

⁸⁵ See *Arist. DA* 433^b5–13, *Historia Animalium* 488^b25–6, *Prior Analytics* 669^a20–1. The sense of one's past (as well as one's possible future) is especially marked in *Il.* 22. 99–110.

⁸⁶ See e.g. Wiggins (1980a), 227–31; Sorabji (1980a), 205–14; Irwin (1988), 338–9; Lear (1988), 143–51; Sherman (1989), ch. 3.

⁸⁷ See *Il.* 11. 408–10, 22. 99–110. On the issue of the scope of deliberation in Aristotle, see refs. in n. 86 above, and Ch. 5 n. 281 below.

⁸⁸ See e.g. *DA* 434^a5–9: deliberative *phantasia* ('impression' or 'imagination') is found only in 'calculative' animals (presumably human beings): '... for whether this or that shall be enacted is already a task requiring calculation [*logismos*]; and there must be a single standard to measure by, for that is pursued which is greater' (tr. Barnes, 1984). See also *DA* 415^a7–11, 433^a9–12; this type of preferential reasoning (measuring courses of action against each other by a single standard to determine the one which must be adopted now) is evident in the deliberative processes analysed in n. 83 above.

pattern displayed in the practical syllogism of Chapter 7 of *De Motu Animalium*. The resulting 'deliberate desire' (which is what 'choice' is) explains the action without any need to posit a further exercise of will by the agent.⁸⁹

The preferential structure of Homeric deliberation can also be brought out by comparison with some aspects of the Stoic model of human (or rational)⁹⁰ motivation. The Stoics, like Aristotle, see the motivation of rational animals as a more complex version of that of non-rational animals. In both cases, an impression (*phantasia*) leads to an impulse to act (*hormē*) in an appropriate, goal-directed way. 'A rational animal, however, in addition to its impressionistic nature, has reason which passes judgement on impressions, rejecting some of these and accepting others, in order that the animal may be guided accordingly' (LS 53A). As it is put elsewhere, the rational animal needs to give 'assent' to her impressions before they motivate action. The idea is sometimes expressed in linguistic terms. A rational impression is said to be 'one in which the content . . . can be exhibited in language'. Further, 'propositions [*axiomata*] are the objects of assent; but impulses are directed towards predicates [*kategoremata*], which are contained in a sense in the propositions' (LS 33C and I). The process envisaged seems to be of this kind. The response of a rational animal to her environment has linguistic, and specifically propositional, content (for instance, 'this food looks good'); and she has to 'assent' to the proposition before she activates an 'impulse' to eat. She assents, or fails to assent, to the proposition as a whole; but the impulse is directed specifically towards the predicate, 'looks good', and it is this which generates the action.⁹¹

The Homeric monologues strongly anticipate some features of this model. Although the Stoic model does not envisage assent to impressions as being necessarily a conscious process, the formulation of the model and the very notion of 'assent' presuppose the idea of thought as inner dialogue, which the monologues memorably

⁸⁹ See NE 1112^b31–1113^a12 (choice is *βουλευτική ὁρεξις*). See also NE 1139^b4–5 ('Therefore, choice is either desiring thought or thoughtful desire [*ὁρεκτικὸς νοῦς* . . . ἢ ὁρεξις διανοητική], and such an origin of action is a human being'). This passage is noted by Wilkes as indicative of Aristotle's non-Cartesian psychological framework (text to n. 46 above); see also *Eudemian Ethics* (EE) 1226^b21–5.

⁹⁰ 'Rational animals', for the Stoics, consist of (adult) human beings and gods but not non-human animals; see further Inwood (1985), 72–80.

⁹¹ See LS, vol. 1, 239–41 and Inwood (1985), 56–66, 84–6; and, for a further qualification, M. Frede (1986), 103–6.

convey.⁹² Also, and most relevantly, the monologues are structured in a way that displays certain types of assent (and dissent) or acceptance (and rejection). In each case, the speaker puts to himself a course of action which he subsequently rejects with the formulaic line: 'But why does my spirit debate this with me?', before accepting an alternative course of action. This striking and familiar formulation might well serve as an illustration of a kind of response which Stoic philosophers sometimes advocate: that of pausing before responding to one's impressions, and appraising them before assenting.⁹³ As in the Stoic model, the Homeric 'assent' is made to the value-laden predicates ('x is good', and so on) which are contained in the formulations of the imagined courses of action.⁹⁴ This reflects the fact that, in both the Homeric and Stoic models, the 'assent' is seen as acceptance of the validity, or truth, of the statement involved, and not as an act of 'free' will by an autonomous agent, as in the Kantian model.⁹⁵ Obviously, in Stoic theory, not all human motivation is conceived as being as conscious, or as fully articulated, as it is presented as being in the Homeric monologues.⁹⁶ None the less, the Homeric monologues may serve as an illustration of the basic structure of the process envisaged on the Stoic model;⁹⁷ and this fact reflects the

⁹² Each monologue is presented as one which the figure 'spoke to his own great-hearted spirit'; see nn. 61–2 above. Aristotle sometimes presents the practical syllogism as a type of internal discourse: see e.g. DA 432^b26–433^a3, 434^a16–21, MA 701^a32–3, NE 1147^a31–4. Sorabji (1993), 36–7, also suggests that belief is presented in DA 428^a19–24 as the outcome of an internal discourse, i.e. self-persuasion.

⁹³ This is a recurrent theme in Epictetus: see e.g. *Discourses* (Diss.) 1. 1. 7, 2. 1. 4, 2. 22. 29, 4. 6. 34; also Inwood (1985), 81–5, esp. 84; Long (1991), 11–20. Advice such as that of 2. 18. 24, 'Wait for me a little, impression . . . let me examine you', implies that not all acts of assent are conceived as being conscious.

⁹⁴ Charles (1984), 84–96, argues that Aristotle's use of the practical syllogism also implies that desire is a mode of accepting the (value-laden) propositions displayed in the syllogism: see esp. DA 431^a8–14, NE 1139^a21–6.

⁹⁵ On this feature of the Stoic theory, see Inwood (1985), 96–7. In the Homeric model, the same idea is implied by the formulation, 'I know that . . .', II. 11. 408, 'I have learnt that . . .', 6. 444–5; this is combined with the acceptance of, or 'internalization' of, social standards of conduct. on which see 1.3–4 below, esp. text to nn. 125, 151–2, 188.

⁹⁶ Thus, the suggestion made by Kahn (1988), 245–7, that the Stoic concept of assent anticipates the Cartesian, and pre-Cartesian, concept of (conscious) volition is rather misleading. See also n. 93 above; and, on the psychological status of the Homeric monologues, see the following paragraph in the text.

⁹⁷ I know of no evidence to suggest that the Stoics *did* see the Homeric deliberative monologue as prefiguring their idea that rational motivation involves assent; however, on their general readiness to use Homeric psychological vocabulary in this way, see Gill (1983a), esp. 136–7.

similarity in the models of human psychology presupposed in each case.

One question which this comparison raises is whether the Homeric monologues are, indeed, to be taken as representations of *conscious* thought-processes? This is an intelligible question (at least, for post-Cartesian readers); but it is far from clear what kind of indications, if any, are available in Homeric psychological terminology to distinguish conscious from non-conscious processes. It is clear that, in the spectrum of Homeric psychological processes, deliberation counts as being among the more 'thoughtful' (to use a fairly neutral term); and that, among the ways of presenting deliberation, monologue serves as a vehicle for conveying more elaborate or intense types of deliberation.⁹⁸ But I think that we should resist pursuing this point along Cartesian lines, and suggesting, for instance, that the use of monologue denotes a type of inner dialogue of which the person concerned is necessarily conscious. If one is forced to answer the question whether the Homeric monologues represent conscious or non-conscious thought, one would have to say 'conscious'. But it seems clear that what the Homeric figures are presented as being conscious of is the dilemma in which they find themselves and the solutions that they offer to these. There is nothing in the mode of portrayal to suggest that the figures are conceived (as in a Cartesian model) of being self-consciously aware of the thought-processes displayed in the monologues, or that the presentation of their thoughts as inner dialogue is designed to denote this. What the use of monologue seems rather to signify is the exceptional isolation in which the figures find themselves at these moments, so that (as one might put it) they have no one with whom to share their dilemmas but themselves.⁹⁹ In other words, the use of inner dialogue (and the kind and degree of 'self-consciousness' thus conveyed) is a product of the figure's interpersonal situation at the time rather than of anything resembling the Cartesian assumption that thought is necessarily conscious.¹⁰⁰ As the preceding discussion has brought out, it is the

⁹⁸ On Homeric modes of deliberation, see nn. 58–61 above, and, on Homeric psychological modes in general, 3.2–3 below.

⁹⁹ This is esp. clear in *Il.* 22. 99–130 (also *Od.* 20. 18–21, discussed in 3.2 below); see also n. 61 above.

¹⁰⁰ For the suggestion that (in a non-Cartesian framework) distinctively *conscious* thoughts are to be understood as a product of certain special types of social situation, see Dennett (1976), 191–3. See also text to nn. 190–9 below. On mental states as

figure's reasons for acting in the way he does, and the reasoning by which he determines this, that the monologue primarily conveys, rather than the fact that he is conscious of that reasoning.

In proposing the idea of an 'objective-participant' conception of self in the Introduction, a conception symbolized by the idea of 'the self in dialogue', I have commented that the Greek tendency to represent thought as an internal dialogue is a suggestive one, though one which needs careful interpretation.¹⁰¹ What I have in view, principally, is that this mode of representation conveys the idea of the mind as a complex of functions (engaged in 'dialogue', or communication, with each other) rather than as a unitary and self-conscious 'I'. The psychological model that seems to be presupposed, in Greek as in some modern thought, is that of someone who acts on the basis of reasons, and of reasoning, rather than of a self-conscious 'I' who is a source of (conscious) volitions.¹⁰² However, this way of representing thought needs to be interpreted with care, in order to avoid the misleading inference that, in Homer or in the Greek theories, psychological processes are conceived as involving an underlying stratum of consciousness (presented here as inner dialogue). In Homer, as just emphasized, the situation is rather the reverse: the deliberative monologues represent an (exceptional) internalization of the interpersonal discourse which is central to the modes of living presented in the poem and which constitutes the standard context of deliberation. Relatedly, in Greek philosophical theories, internal dialogue constitutes either a way of displaying psychological processes which are not necessarily conceived as conscious,¹⁰³ or as the medium of certain special types of conscious self-address.¹⁰⁴ The latter type of case (like the Homeric monologues)

necessarily conscious in the Cartesian model, see 1.1 above, text to n. 18, and text to nn. 40–1 above.

¹⁰¹ See *Introd.*, text to n. 40.

¹⁰² On these contrasting models, see 1.1 above, text to nn. 38–44. To say this is not to suggest that there is *no* coherence in Homeric psychological life (because there is no self-conscious unitary 'I'); this is the view of Snell and Adkins, 1.1 above. There is the kind of coherence that we find in models such as Dennett's functionalist picture of psychological life as consisting in the interplay of parts, Dennett (1979), ch. 9.

¹⁰³ For internal dialogue (in the practical syllogism), see *MA* 701*25–8, cited in text to n. 79 above as involving non-conscious motivation. The status (whether conscious or not) of the other examples listed in n. 92 is, significantly, not defined. On Stoic assents as not necessarily conscious (however they are presented), see n. 93 above.

¹⁰⁴ See below 3.6, text to nn. 195–231, including text to nn. 226–8, on *Pl. R.* 439e–440a (also 4.2, text to nn. 38–41).

reflects certain special interpersonal or communal conditions in which the figure feels, exceptionally, the need to address himself rather than others. Also, in the Homeric monologues, the content of the inner dialogue reflects the figures' sense of themselves as social participants, in ways that I underline in the next section. Understood in this way, the presentation of thought as inner dialogue can, indeed, help to convey some of the connotations of the objective-participant conception of the person.

This relates, in turn, to the more general point which I want to bring out in this section. My aim has been not simply to underline the degree of similarity between the patterns of practical reasoning embodied in the Homeric monologues and analysed in the Aristotelian and Stoic theories (striking though this is). It is rather to show that the patterns of reasoning involved become more intelligible if they are approached from a more appropriate intellectual framework than that presupposed by Snell and Adkins. The post-Cartesian framework of assumptions about the mind that they took as their starting-point is directly linked with the conclusion that they reached: that the Greek models of mind show a primitive or deficient understanding of the self; more precisely, a primitive or defective understanding of the *Cartesian* conception of the self. However, when approached by way of contemporary theories of mind and motivation, such as action-theory, the Greek patterns seem both more coherent and more psychologically credible. I have also tried to bring out the features that might make one characterize the Greek (like contemporary non-Cartesian) models as 'objective' in outlook rather than 'subjective'. I have here in view principally the fact that, in these models, motivation is analysed in terms of certain types of reasons and of reasoning, rather than in terms of the volitions, or acts of will, of a self-conscious 'I'. In the next section and in later chapters, I connect this type of non-subjective understanding of the mind with the conception of the person as a social participant rather than an isolated individual.

1.3 HOMERIC MODELS OF ETHICAL MOTIVATION: ODYSSEUS' MONOLOGUE

I now re-examine the Homeric monologues, in connection with another issue raised by the discussions of Snell and Adkins, that of the nature of ethical (or moral) motivation. As in the case of practical

reasoning, I start by considering some contemporary criticisms of the Kantian moral ideas whose validity is assumed by Snell and Adkins.¹⁰⁵ I consider especially the anti-Kantian ethical theories of MacIntyre and Williams.¹⁰⁶ I argue that their thinking on these subjects provides a better basis for understanding the ethical motivation displayed in the Homeric monologues than do the Kantian assumptions of Snell and Adkins. As in the case of practical reasoning, I underline certain connections between the Homeric patterns and Aristotelian and Stoic thinking on these subjects, connections which these contemporary theories help us to recognize. I also underline certain interconnections between the Greek models of ethical motivation and those of practical reasoning.

As noted earlier, central to Kant's theory is the idea that we have, as moral agents, autonomy of the will, and that, in a properly moral response, this autonomy is expressed in the agent's binding herself to universal laws. It would be a misinterpretation of Kant to suppose that this process is conceived as a highly theorized one: that the moral agent necessarily *thinks of herself* as having autonomy of the will and binding herself to universal laws. Kant takes himself to be characterizing the morality of the ordinary (moral) person, and to be spelling out what is involved in an ordinary person's doing her duty with a properly moral attitude. None the less, it seems to be crucial to Kant's theory that the ordinary moral agent, in doing her duty, sees herself as doing what *anyone* should do in similar circumstances.¹⁰⁷ Snell reflects this aspect of Kant's thinking in his comments on the moral limitations of Odysseus' response in *Il.* 11. 404-10. The fact that Odysseus concentrates 'on the thought that he belongs to a certain social order, and that it is his duty to fulfil the "virtue" of that order', instead of testing his response by universalizing it, shows that he (and Homer) have not yet grasped the nature of a properly *moral* response.¹⁰⁸

It is against this aspect of Kant's thinking that MacIntyre especially reacts. The aspect of Odysseus' response which, in the Kantian view, emerges as relatively defective is of a type which, in

¹⁰⁵ See 1.1 above, text to nn 28-36.

¹⁰⁶ See also *Introd.*, text to nn. 22-5. Their views can be taken as representative of a larger movement in current ethical theory, sometimes called 'virtue ethics', as distinct from post-Kantian moral theory or Utilitarianism, and often associated with a reappraisal of Greek ethical approaches; see Annas (1993), 8-11.

¹⁰⁷ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 59-70; also 1.1 above, text to nn. 27-31 above.

¹⁰⁸ See Snell (1960), 159, and discussion in 1.1 above, text to nn. 31-3.

MacIntyre's view, is characteristic of a fully virtuous response. MacIntyre thinks that it is instructive for us to examine Homeric (and, more generally, Greek) ethical thinking precisely because it exhibits certain features that have become eroded in modern ethical thinking and in the forms of social life which such thinking reflects. MacIntyre sees such features as fundamental to any ethical thought of a sustainable and coherent type. He describes Homeric ethical thinking as having three interrelated elements:

a conception of what is required by the social role which each individual inhabits; a conception of excellences or virtues as those qualities which enable an individual to do what his or her role requires; and a conception of the human condition as fragile and vulnerable to destiny and to death, such that to be virtuous is not to avoid vulnerability and death, but rather to accord them their due. (1985, 128–9)

It is the relationship between the first two elements that is crucial here. Central to MacIntyre's conception of a virtue is that it 'tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices' (p. 191, italics deleted); and by a 'practice' he understands 'any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative activity' through which 'human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended' (p. 187). Homeric ethical thinking (by contrast with modern, post-Enlightenment thinking) is valuable precisely because it offers a picture of human life as properly lived in the exercise of virtues which are coherently related to the roles and practices of a cohesive society.¹⁰⁹

MacIntyre's thesis can be restated in these terms. A prerequisite of virtue is that the agent sees his role as having real ethical weight; and this depends on the role fitting into a nexus of such roles and on that nexus forming part of a coherent tradition. None the less, virtue does not consist simply in fulfilling the relevant role, but in fulfilling it in a way that is designed to achieve 'the goods internal to' the practice which is correlated with the role. What it means to fulfil

¹⁰⁹ The contrast is with modern thinking in which (1) there is no cohesive socio-ethical framework and (2) in which ethical reflection is not based on such a framework. See *Introd.*, text to nn. 22–5, 6.5 below, text to nn. 102–3. MacIntyre's claim in (1985) that Greek ethical thought is *both* different in type from, and exemplary for, modern thought has been widely criticized (but see also Ch. 6 below, n. 144); and MacIntyre (1988) offers a different account of the relationship between Greek and modern thought (see *Introd.*, n. 24). For qualifications to MacIntyre's views about the cohesiveness of the Homeric ethical framework, see text to nn. 133–4 below.

such goods varies in different social contexts. But in the case of a Homeric chieftain, as Odysseus' monologue brings out, fulfilling those goods involves the thought that it is worthwhile to stand one's ground in battle even at the risk of one's death.¹¹⁰ Thus, MacIntyre might himself offer Snell's account of Odysseus' response (that Odysseus concentrates 'on the thought that he belongs to a certain social order, and that it is his duty to fulfil the "virtue" of that order') as an exemplification of part of what virtue, quite properly, involves. The Iliadic monologues also bring out further aspects of MacIntyre's conception of virtue: that the role or practice should be one by reference to which the person concerned can place, and see as significant, the narrative of his own life, and through which he can form a conception of what human excellence involves.¹¹¹ These larger dimensions of what virtue involves might seem to be analogous to the autonomous (self-legislating) universalization of one's case that is central to Kant's theory. But, among other differences, it is crucial that, for MacIntyre, the 'universalization' is mediated by the fulfilment of the role. Indeed, the primary ethical response lies in such fulfilment (more precisely, in the achievement of the 'goods internal to it'); and, given that the role is a specific one, with a place in a specific nexus of practices, *universalization* is not quite what is involved. Also, the agent, in MacIntyre's view, does not give his fulfilment of the role this larger significance *as an individual* in the way that Kant's self-legislating agent does. It is as someone who is ethically engaged in his community that the agent sees the achievement of his role as a valid form of human excellence, and such engagement is a precondition for proper ethical reflection.¹¹²

Williams's ethical approach is close to MacIntyre's, on this point, and has similar implications for the interpretation of the ethical character of Homeric deliberation. For instance, his claim that ethical knowledge is achieved in a life guided by 'thick' (culturally localized) ethical values rather than by 'thin' (universalized) ones is comparable to MacIntyre's claim about what constitutes valid ethical life and reflection.¹¹³ Williams has also developed a related line of

¹¹⁰ See MacIntyre (1985), 185–96, linking his account of Homeric virtue (121–30) with his idea of fulfilling the goods internal to practices.

¹¹¹ See MacIntyre (1985), ch. 15; also 1.2 above, text to nn. 86–7.

¹¹² See MacIntyre (1985), ch. 4, esp. 43–7 (on Kant), and chs. 14–15, esp. 191–6, 219–23.

¹¹³ See Williams (1985), 140–5; see also 4.5 below, text to nn. 162–8.

criticism of Kant's conception of morality which is relevant here. The core idea is that it is unclear how the moral response, as Kant conceives this, is to acquire the intensity of commitment which Kant requires. Crucial to Kant's theory is the idea that the autonomous will is not affected by emotions and desires, by practical considerations, or by personal and communal attachments, other than those which the agent can universalize rationally.¹¹⁴ Yet it is also clear that Kant envisages the moral response as being one of total commitment, and as involving some kind of psychological unity; as he puts it, 'duty' means acting 'out of reverence for the law'.¹¹⁵ Williams has, at various times, expressed deep scepticism about the possibility of reconciling these two requirements of Kant's theory; and about the picture of human psychology that seems to underlie them. Since the claims of impartial reason (on the Kantian model) invite us to treat as, in themselves, weightless the kind of considerations that normally motivate human action—for instance, the desire to save *my wife's* life, rather than anyone else's—he argues that it is unclear how those claims can conjure up the required totality of moral commitment.¹¹⁶ This line of argument is distinct from MacIntyre's, as summarized here, but it is clearly in some ways complementary to it. The normal points of focus for our ethical—and emotional—engagement are those roles and practices which MacIntyre sees as the central vehicles of the expression of virtue. To put the point in a more general form, MacIntyre and Williams argue for a conception of moral motivation which is diametrically opposed to Kant's. Whereas for Kant, such motivation depends on the individual abstracting herself from localized connections (as a corollary of autonomous universalization), for MacIntyre and Williams, it depends on the fullest possible engagement of the individual with the localized nexus of roles and relationships in which she finds herself.

The character of the account of ethical motivation offered by MacIntyre and Williams may be sharpened by reference to two other discussions. Although these are not directed at quite the same issues, they serve to illustrate the picture of ethical life presupposed by MacIntyre and Williams. P. F. Strawson, in a famous essay (1974a), underlines the primary character, in our understanding of ourselves and others, of our participation in a network of 'reactive

¹¹⁴ See 1.1 above, text to nn. 29–31.

¹¹⁵ Kant, *ML*, p. 66; see also 4.2 below, text to nn. 9–10.

¹¹⁶ See Williams (1981a), 14–19; (1985), 184–96, esp. 189–91; also (1973a), 225–9.

attitudes', such as gratitude and resentment. He also defines an alternative attitude, in which we exempt people from the participant or reactive attitudes which they would normally arouse.¹¹⁷ But he stresses that this second attitude is derived from the primary set of attitudes, which constitute the immediate context of ethical and, indeed, intellectual life. Strawson's point is not explicitly linked with the contrast between Kantian and non-Kantian conceptions of proper interpersonal relationships. But it does serve to define the conception of ethical life which MacIntyre and Williams have in view in their criticisms of Kant. The same is true of an essay of Charles Taylor on the 'person' (1985). He begins with the idea that a person's understanding of her actions depends on her status as a 'self-interpreter'; that is, the significance of her actions depends on the nature of her conception of *herself* (this idea has clear links with the post-Cartesian conception of the person).¹¹⁸ But he goes on to claim that the status of the person as self-interpreter cannot be understood properly without referring to another, and more primary, status. This is that of her role as an 'interlocutor' in the public space of discourse from which she draws the significance by which she interprets herself.¹¹⁹ Again, Taylor's essay, while not directed at the same debate in which MacIntyre and Williams are engaged, reinforces their understanding of ethical life.

In his most recent work, Williams has himself drawn out the implications of his theory for understanding the ethical and psychological thinking in Homer and Greek tragedy, including that expressed in Homeric deliberation. In ways that are parallel to this discussion (and which have helped to shape it), he emphasizes that the developmental approach to Greek thinking of Snell and Adkins rests on Cartesian assumptions about the mind and Kantian assumptions about ethics. If Greek thinking is approached without those assumptions and from a philosophical outlook closer to his, the conceptual divide between Greek culture and ourselves seems much less marked than it does on this kind of developmental account.¹²⁰ Of the points that he makes I dwell here only on that

¹¹⁷ Strawson's examples of non-reactive, 'objective' relationships are those of a parent to a child (in part) or a psychoanalyst to a patient (19–20).

¹¹⁸ See also C. Taylor (1976) and (1977), which take their starting-point from Frankfurt (1971); see further Ch. 6 below, n. 66.

¹¹⁹ C. Taylor (1985) esp. 274–8. See also C. Taylor (1989), ch. 2, esp. 35–40.

¹²⁰ See Williams (1993), 4–11; also 26–7, 32–6, 66–8, 151–4, 158–67. I am grateful to

relating to the distinction between shame and guilt (more precisely, between shame-culture and guilt-culture). This is one of the most widely used distinctions in developmental accounts of Greek culture; but it is not always defined very carefully, and those who use it often have rather different kinds of distinction in mind.¹²¹ Williams's discussion bears especially on those versions of the distinction in which the intended contrast is between a culture in which ethical standards depend on social interactions and interpersonal judgements and one in which they depend on the individual's independent sense of right and wrong.¹²² Williams makes two points about this distinction. Those who use it often presuppose that the second type of moral response is superior or more 'mature'. In doing so, they are often taking for granted the Kantian conception of morality, with its prerequisites of autonomy and self-universalization. Williams challenges those who make these assumptions to recognize their conceptual basis, and to make sure that they intend to endorse the priority of the Kantian picture of morality.¹²³ Given the criticisms of this picture made by Williams and MacIntyre elsewhere, there must be, at least, a question about such endorsement.¹²⁴ Correspond-

Bernard Williams for giving me a text of the Sather Classical Lectures which were the basis for Williams (1993).

¹²¹ Dodds (1951), whose use of the distinction was enormously influential, understands 'guilt' primarily in a religious sense, and focuses on the way in which Archaic and Classical Greek religious thinking generated, first of all, 'a sense of guilt' and then 'a sense of sin', as a result of the 'internalising' of conscience (see ch. 2, esp. 36-7). Vernant (1981) and Saïd (1978), part 2, have in mind a development from a collective sense of responsibility to an individual one, especially through the evolution of civic procedures of justice. For Adkins, a shame-culture (or results-culture) is characterized by the absence of a Kantian understanding of duty and responsibility: see 1.1 above, text to nn. 27-30, 34-6; also Rowe (1983), on Dodds and Adkins.

¹²² See e.g. Dodds (1951), 17-18; Adkins (1960), 46-9 (also 2-7); see further refs. in Cairns (1993), 27-8.

¹²³ Williams (1993), ch. 4, esp. 75-8, 91-5, 97-8. See his comments in ch. 2, 40-2, about the supposed absence from Homer of 'the will', i.e. the Kantian conception of the will as (in principle) pure, autonomous, and motivated by duty alone. See also Cairns, who argues that the use of the shame-guilt distinction by anthropologists such as Benedict and Mead, who influenced Dodds and other Classical scholars, gave a universal status to a conception of morality (one that is centred on the notions of conscience, guilt, and duty), which is specifically shaped by Protestant Christianity. See Cairns (1993), 27-47, esp. 33-4, 36-7, 40-1. On the Protestant (Lutheran) underpinnings of the Kantian conception of morality, see MacIntyre (1985), 43-7.

¹²⁴ One response would be to try to offer a non-Kantian definition of 'guilt' and 'guilt-culture'. But, given the prevalence of Kantian assumptions in our thinking on

ingly, if one accepts the idea that the nexus of roles and shared practices (and of the 'reactive attitudes' associated with these) is properly seen as the primary locus of ethical life, much of the supposed primitiveness of 'shame culture' disappears.

Williams's second point is that the distinction between these two kinds of moral response (and between the two kinds of culture associated with them) is often overstated. In particular, he disputes the assumption that the response of shame is to be regarded as being, necessarily, more superficial (in so far as it depends on social reactions and evaluations) than that of guilt. Shame, as it functions in Greek and modern culture, does not depend just on face-to-face interaction and on the interpersonal judgements made in that context. Shame can involve a sense of the 'internalized other' (that is, a sense of the kind of response that another person *might* give to one's actions). To suggest this is not to assimilate shame to guilt. The 'other' who is internalized is still regarded as a participant in the nexus of reactive attitudes that constitutes the primary arena of ethical life. She is not the representative of the agent's autonomous universalization of principles; nor is she to be identified with the 'voice of conscience' if that voice is taken to come from some source other than that nexus of reactive attitudes. Shame, even on this deeper understanding, remains distinct from guilt, as conceived in post-Kantian terms. But shame is not distinct because it is necessarily more superficial than guilt; and Williams argues that any developmental account which uses the distinction needs to bear this in mind.¹²⁵

It is the line of approach towards Homeric ethics suggested by MacIntyre and Williams that I develop here. I think that their approach can help us to formulate a relatively fine-grained reading of the ethical motivation presented in the deliberative monologues. I also extend the connections made in the previous section between

guilt (on which see Williams (1985), ch. 10, esp. 189-96), this is not necessarily easy to provide.

¹²⁵ See Williams (1993), ch. 4, esp. 81-97, referring to, among other examples, Hector in *Il.* 22. 105-7, and Sophocles, *Ajax* (*Ai.*), 462-6. See also G. Taylor (1985), 53-68, to which Williams refers. Cairns (1993), 15-26 (also 141-6) takes this line of argument even further. Although allowing that some scope remains for distinguishing guilt from shame (as responses correlated with actions that do, or do not, express personal agency, pp. 21-2), he argues that a full recognition of the degree of internalization involved in shame leads ultimately to the collapse of the distinction between the two notions (pp. 24-6).

the patterns of thinking embodied in the Homeric monologues and those that feature in Aristotelian and Stoic theory. I have suggested that Aristotelian and Stoic accounts of distinctively human rationality can help us to interpret the conception of motivation, and the patterns of reasoning, expressed in the monologues. Relatedly, Aristotelian and Stoic thinking on virtue can help us to define the patterns of ethical motivation expressed in the monologues, and also to make sense of the variations in the character of the motivation of the four Homeric figures.¹²⁶

The relevance of Aristotelian thinking to the formulation of a non-Kantian ethical approach is recognized fully by MacIntyre and Williams.¹²⁷ Stoic ethical thinking is seen by MacIntyre rather as a precursor of the Kantian approach; but I share the view of some other scholars that it represents rather an intensification of the type of ethical thinking represented by Aristotle.¹²⁸ Both Greek theories offer versions of two ideas which are central to the kind of ethical approach advocated by MacIntyre and Williams. They both accommodate, in different ways, the idea that ethical life can be properly understood as inhering in the fullest possible participation in the roles and practices of the community; and that the ethical (or moral) quality of this response does not depend on an autonomous act of self-binding to universal principles. They both accommodate, in different ways, the idea that such participation is properly associated with full psychological engagement (involving interrelated reasoning, emotion, and desire); and this is again different from the kind of rationality, and abstraction from personal inclinations, associated by Kant with the moral response. Both these features bear on the way in which the Greek theories understand the idea that a virtuous act is performed for its own sake (an idea which figures in both theories). The way that they bear on this idea helps to mark the difference between their understanding of this and Kant's understanding of the

¹²⁶ One can say this without overlooking the differences in kind between Homeric *ethics* (i.e. the ethical values embodied in the poems) and Aristotelian and Stoic *theories* (i.e. analyses of what is involved in living by ethical values); and without denying that there are differences between Homeric values and those presupposed by those theories. One point of (partial) continuity between poetic and philosophical thinking lies in the philosophers' retention of the idea that shame (*aidos*) plays a significant role in the development of virtue and in grades of virtue slightly below the highest level: see Belfiore (1992), 33–5 (on Plato's *Laws*), 189–216 (on Aristotle).

¹²⁷ See MacIntyre (1985), ch. 12, 196–203; Williams (1985), ch. 3.

¹²⁸ See MacIntyre (1985), 168–70, 234–7; also Long (1983); Irwin (1986b); Gill (1988), 172–3.

superficially similar idea of the absolute priority of morality (as expressed in the Categorical Imperative). These claims raise large issues for my topic which are discussed more fully later.¹²⁹ Here, I simply illustrate these points in sufficient detail to define certain comparable features of the Homeric presentation of ethical motivation in the deliberative monologues.

I take the monologues one by one, beginning with that of Odysseus (*Il.* 11. 404–10) which, while the shortest and, in some ways, the most straightforward, provides the clearest illustration of the relationship between Homeric and Greek philosophical ethical thinking. Snell disparages the ethical quality of Odysseus' motivation on two related, post-Cartesian and post-Kantian grounds. The fact that Odysseus refers to an 'objective norm' shows that his decision was not a genuine personal one (made by a self-conscious 'I') but one determined 'from outside'; the decision is based on class-based considerations and not on an autonomous act of self-universalization.¹³⁰ I focus here on the second reason for criticism. Snell's comments seem to rest on three, interconnected assumptions: (1) that the key terms in 408–10 (*aristeuein* and perhaps also *kakoi*) are primarily class-based; (2) that in Homer one's class or status carries unequivocal ethical implications; and (3) that any decision which makes reference to status-based considerations (as distinct from self-universalization) is thereby not a properly *moral* one. All three assumptions can be questioned, on related grounds. Snell seems to interpret 408–10 to mean, in essence: 'I know that social inferiors [*kakoi*] run away in such circumstances, but a man who is to live up to what being a noble involves [*aristeuein*] must stand his ground.'¹³¹ It would be misleading to suggest that, in Homer, terms such as *kakoi* and *aristeuein* are ever *wholly* free of connotations of status; but it is also wrong to claim that such connotations are always at the forefront of the meaning. Odysseus is, of course, a *basileus*, a king or chieftain, and this fact underlies his situation. But the dilemma he faces is what he, as a chieftain, should do: whether he should stand his ground or give way. He resolves it

¹²⁹ On Kantian, Platonic (and Aristotelian) ethical psychology, see below 4.2–3; on relevant features of Stoic ethical psychology, see 3.6, text to nn. 199–231; and of Stoic ethics, 5.6, text to nn. 220–30; 5.7, text to nn. 363–4. On the Kantian–Greek contrast, see 6.7, text to nn. 236–43.

¹³⁰ See Snell (1930), 144–5, (1960), 159, and discussion in 1.1 above, esp. text to nn. 31–3.

¹³¹ Snell (1960), 159, cited in 1.1, text to n. 32 and text to nn. 109, 111 above.

with the thought that one course of action is what cowardly (chieftains) do, while, if he is to 'be best' (*aristeuein*) among chieftains, he must stand his ground. On this reading, the key terms are primarily ethical (as is Odysseus' earlier description of the option of flight as 'a very bad thing', that is, a very 'cowardly' or 'ignoble' act (*mega... kakon*, 404), though to say this is not to suggest that Odysseus in any sense disowns his status in evaluating his options.¹³²

Snell's comments also seem to reflect the assumption that (what he sees as) status-based value-terms such as *aristeuein* do not simply guide but settle dilemmas definitively: as he puts it, Odysseus gauges 'his action by the rigid concept of honour peculiar to his caste' (1960), 159. The idea that Homeric ethics (sometimes described as the 'heroic code') constitutes a wholly determinate framework in which questions (both general and specific) can be settled definitively is regrettably common. This idea was stated, memorably, by M. I. Finley, and has left its influence on MacIntyre.¹³³ But, as Malcolm Schofield (1986) especially brings out, the *Iliad* is structured around debate and disagreement about what should be done in any given situation and about what values should inform the shared actions and relationships on each side. This does not mean that Homeric figures operate as unfettered individuals in an ethical vacuum. The existence of such debate and disagreement is compatible with the idea that these chieftains are reactively engaged in an ethical community (though a community which is, on the Greek side, peculiarly fragile).¹³⁴ But it does mean that Snell's assumption that Odysseus could, in Homeric ethics, resolve his

¹³² See also *Il.* 2. 365–6, 'you will find out which of your leaders is cowardly [*kakos*], and which of your people, and which is brave [*esthlos*]', and 8. 153; also 6. 208, 11. 784, in which what is at stake is 'excelling' among chieftains. Cf. Hainsworth (1993), note on *Il.* 11. 408–10, referring to 6. 441–6, 13. 116–19. See further Long (1970), 126–8; Cairns (1993), 101, criticizing Adkins's (1966) treatment of *agathos* in Homer, which is comparable to Snell's. For a good survey of evaluative vocabulary in Homer, showing that such vocabulary is not just based on status, see Yamagata (1994), ch. 10, esp. 205–6 (on *aristos*), 208 (on *aristeuo*), 208–9, 219–20 (on *kakos* applied to persons and things).

¹³³ See Finley (1972), 132–4: 'The heroic code was complete and unambiguous... the basic values of the society were given, predetermined, and so were a man's place in the society and the privileges and duties that followed from his status. They were not subject to analysis or debate, and the other issues left only the narrowest margin for the exercise of what we should call judgement', cited by Schofield (1986), 13. See also MacIntyre (1985), 122–30, citing Finley on p. 122; and, in criticism of MacIntyre on this point, Williams (1985), 220 n. 7.

¹³⁴ See 2.5–8, 3.3 below.

dilemma simply by referring to his status as a chieftain, together with the values attached to this status, is misplaced. This point is underlined by the fact that, although the speakers in the four monologues, all chieftains (three of them major ones), face comparable dilemmas, they reach different conclusions by different reasoning.

Also underlying Snell's thinking on this point is his assumption that Greek culture is to be considered ethically primitive precisely in so far as it fails to express the Kantian idea that the moral response depends on an autonomous stance of self-universalization. He is quite right to claim that Odysseus' decision is not well understood in these terms; though couched in general terms, Odysseus' concluding reflection presupposes the ethical relevance of his status as a Greek chieftain to his dilemma.¹³⁵ But the question remains what kind of account we should give of the ethical quality of Odysseus' response, if we do not accept Snell's presumptions.¹³⁶ I think that Aristotelian and Stoic accounts of ethical motivation can provide the kind of interpretative framework that enables us to characterize positively the main features of the Homeric pattern. With regard to the interpretative issues raised by Odysseus' monologue, both Greek theories offer a picture of ethical life as lived in, and through, engagement in social roles and practices without interpreting this idea in the reductive way that Snell does.

Aristotle's account of ethical virtue presupposes that a human life is normally lived within a nexus of interpersonal and communal relationships. But he defines virtue not simply in terms of the fact of such participation but rather by reference to the quality of the participation, and the quality of character which underlies this. Part of his specification is given in terms of the 'mean' (*meson*), a notion which conveys the difficult but important thought that, for any person at any one time, there is a response which it is appropriate for her to make, given her location in a nexus of relationships.¹³⁷ The quality of

¹³⁵ See text to n. 132 above.

¹³⁶ MacIntyre and Williams, discussed in text to nn. 109–16, 120–5 above, have given reasons for not doing so.

¹³⁷ Some of the complexity of what this involves comes out in this statement, *NE* 1106^b21–3: '... to feel [fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and, in general, pleasure and pain] at the right time, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both mean [*meson*] and best, and this is characteristic of virtue.' See further *NE* 2. 6–9. The point that the 'mean' signifies what is ethically 'appropriate', and that the identification of this involves attention to the specifics of one's (ethically laden) social situation is brought out by Hursthouse (1980–1); Sherman (1989), 34–6, 123, 166–7.

this response is also defined in psychological terms, in a way that relates to the previous discussion of practical reasoning:

What affirmation and negation are in thinking, pursuit and avoidance are in desire; so that since ethical virtue is a disposition to make choices, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts.¹³⁸

What this involves, I consider shortly. But these specifications should be taken with two others. One is that the virtuous act is chosen 'for its own sake', a specification which is identical with the idea that it is chosen 'for the sake of the fine' (*to kalon*), as Aristotle often puts it.¹³⁹ The other is that the person concerned acts 'with a firm and consistent character' in this respect.¹⁴⁰ One way of describing the larger implications of these stipulations is this. Aristotle's stipulations about the appropriate or 'mean' response, about psychological cohesion, and about the quality of motive, are unintelligible unless we presuppose (as he does) the participation of the agent in a nexus of roles, practices, and projects. Also, talk of 'participation' is empty unless we specify in some way (as Aristotle does) the character of the response involved.

Aristotle's conception of ethical virtue can be illustrated further by reference to a topic that is germane to the Homeric monologues, that of courage or bravery (*andreia*), which Aristotle sees as being shown above all in the dangers of battle. The brave man is not, for Aristotle, one who has no fear in such a situation. Rather the one '... who bears and fears the right things for the right motive in the right way and at the right time, and who is confident on the same basis, is brave; the brave person feels and acts according to the merits of the case [*κατ' ἀξίαν*], and as reason directs' (NE 1115^b17–20). Such a description presupposes that the brave person weighs the danger to his own life against the military value of the course of action involved; and that this is part of the process by which he determines the 'mean' or appropriate form of response that reflects 'the merits

¹³⁸ NE 1139^a21–6, tr. Barnes (1984), 'moral excellence is a state concerned with choice' revised to 'ethical virtue is a disposition to make choices'.

¹³⁹ See e.g. NE 1105^a32 (*δι' αὐτά*), 'for their own sake'; 1115^b12–13 (*τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα*), 'for the sake of the fine'. For further refs. see Irwin (1986a), 122 n. 11.

¹⁴⁰ *βεβαίως καὶ ἀμετακινήτως ἔχων*, NE 1105^a33.

of the case'.¹⁴¹ But what is crucial about the brave person's practical reasoning is that it is infused by his underlying disposition (*hexis*), his deep-rooted desire to do the fine thing for its own sake. Thus, '... while he will fear even such things [those which are not beyond human endurance], he will do so as he should and as reason directs and will bear them for the sake of the fine; this is the goal [*telos*] of virtue.'¹⁴² Part of what this involves is that, once he has reasoned out what course of action represents the 'mean' course of action, and the means to fulfil his end, qua brave man, he will feel, as well as act, accordingly.¹⁴³

Odysseus' monologue seems to correspond, to a surprising degree, to this type of pattern. His initial characterization of the options is already ethically coloured ('It will be very bad if I run away'), while recognizing that the likely alternative is more terrible (*ρίγιον*, literally, 'what makes me shudder more'), 404–6.¹⁴⁴ But the latter consideration is set on one side (or 'silenced')¹⁴⁵ by Odysseus' characterization of the options in terms of what 'cowards' (*kakoi*) do, or of what someone does 'who is to be best' (*aristeuein*), 408–9. This is sufficient by itself to determine both Odysseus' decision and his correlated emotional state and action, as presented in the succeeding simile and narrative.¹⁴⁶ Like Aristotle's brave person, Odysseus has a disposition to do the fine thing (once this is determined). This is his goal, qua brave person; and it informs his reasoning, both the way in which he characterizes the options in 404–6 and what counts as a decisive consideration (408–9). Odysseus' example clarifies what is involved in the kind of deliberation that involves both 'true

¹⁴¹ Unreasoned and indiscriminate recklessness is a mark of relatively defective states, NE 1115^b24–32, 1116^b23–1117^a15.

¹⁴² NE 1115^b11–13; see also 1144^a6–9, 1444^b30–2.

¹⁴³ Such reasoning may be more or less instantaneous; but it will be in line with the way in which one would reason more deliberately, provided that one has the right disposition, NE 1117^a16–22.

¹⁴⁴ Thus, like Aristotle's brave person, Odysseus sees what is objectively terrifying in the situation he faces (NE 1115^b7–13). On *kakon*, 'bad', i.e. 'cowardly', 'ignoble', see n. 132 above.

¹⁴⁵ For the idea that, for the virtuous person, some considerations are simply 'silenced', see McDowell (1980), 370.

¹⁴⁶ See Il. 11. 415–16: '... and he comes out of his lair in the deep of a thicket | grinding to an edge the white fangs in the crook of the jawbones', tr. Lattimore (1969). See NE 1115^b11–13, cited in text to n. 142 above, also 17–20; and 1113^a9–14, esp. 11–12, tr. Barnes (1984): 'when we have decided as a result of deliberation, we desire in accordance with our deliberation.'

reasoning' and 'right desire'.¹⁴⁷ Interestingly enough, although both Homer's monologue and Aristotle's analysis of bravery presuppose that the figure involved sees himself as a fighter, co-operatively engaged in the military objectives of the relevant group, the issues are couched, in both cases, in terms of an ethical dilemma, the weighing of the 'terrible' against the act which is 'fine' or characteristic of 'the best'. Relatedly, although there is no suggestion, in either case, that the figure should disown any of the 'thick values' associated with his class or status, the issues are not actually couched in those terms, but in more general, ethical terms.¹⁴⁸ Thus, Snell's claim that Odysseus gauges 'his action by the rigid conception of honour peculiar to his caste' (1960, 159), is particularly inappropriate.

Another interesting feature of Odysseus' monologue (and one that serves to mark it off from the others) is that there is no explicit reference to considerations usually thought to be central to Homeric ethics, namely, honour and shame. On the face of it, this brings Odysseus' response yet closer to Aristotle's norm: Odysseus does the fine thing for its own sake and not because of the honour that accrues to such acts or the shame that results from the failure to perform them.¹⁴⁹ Aristotle uses this criterion to distinguish courage in the full sense from a close relative of it, which he calls 'civic' or 'political' courage. He regards the latter as the closest possible state to proper courage 'because it is due to virtue; it is due to shame and the desire for something fine (namely, honour) and avoidance of criticism, which is disgraceful' (NE 1116^a28–9). Aristotle, interestingly, cites Hector's monologue in *Il.* 22 (line 100) as an example of this type of courage; but we should not infer from this that Aristotle supposes that all Homeric courage is necessarily of this sort.¹⁵⁰ The apparent absence of any such consideration from

¹⁴⁷ See NE 1139^a21–6, cited in text to n. 138 above. The reasoning is 'true', presumably, both in the sense that it is based on correct premisses (correct general rules or correct ends) and that the person reasons validly (i.e. without the character-based failures of reasoning typical of *akrasia*). See further Charles (1984), 288–94.

¹⁴⁸ On 'thick values', see Williams (1985), 143–5; on the interpretation of Homeric ethical terms, see text to nn. 131–2 above.

¹⁴⁹ Lattimore translates *aristeuein* in *Il.* 409 as 'to win honour', instead of 'to be best'; but this might suggest acting *purely* to produce a certain social reaction (unless we also supply an ethically rich understanding of what 'winning honour' means, as suggested by Cairns (1993), 70–1, 85–6).

¹⁵⁰ NE 1116^a17–23. The idea that values are historically conditioned in this way seems to be alien to Greek thinking; in any case, Aristotle would be unlikely to regard Homeric virtue as typically 'civic' (*politike*).

Odysseus' speech is certainly striking; but we should probably not draw too sharp a distinction between Odysseus' monologue and the others in this respect. As Williams argues, in so far as the notion of a 'shame culture' is applicable in a useful way to Homer, it denotes a society in which the participants have an *internalized* sense of the judgements (relating to shame or honour) that other members of their culture would make on their actions.¹⁵¹ Such internalization can reach the point where the people concerned perform the sort of acts that would legitimately gain honour without any explicit desire or expectation of gaining such honour. It could, so to speak, become a point of honour that one should act in this way as being the fine thing to do, without any such expectations. This may be the kind of framework within which to understand Odysseus' attitude here, as well as Hector's internalized sense of shame in his monologue;¹⁵² although other factors may also be at work, affecting Odysseus' expression of his motives.¹⁵³ If so, there is, after all, some difference between Odysseus' stance and that which Aristotle takes to be characteristic of proper courage (from which all considerations of honour or shame are eliminated).¹⁵⁴ But the gap is not so great as to invalidate the use of Aristotle's criteria for virtue to define the character of the Homeric pattern of motivation.

Stoic thinking on ethical motivation can also be noted usefully here. Stoic thinking also accommodates the idea that virtue is properly expressed in performing the 'appropriate acts' (*kathekonta*) which attach to one's nexus of interpersonal and communal relationships, but that it does not follow from this that 'virtue' is to be understood simply in class-based or status-based terms. Stoic thinking also contains, in its own way, the idea that the virtuous person has a type of consistency of character and of cohesion of reasoning

¹⁵¹ Williams (1993), 81–8; see also Cairns (1993), 15–18.

¹⁵² For this type of interpretation of these two passages (and also of Hector's words at *Il.* 6. 441–6, cited in n. 209 below), see Cairns (1993), 80–3, esp. 81 n.113.

¹⁵³ Fenik (1978a), 71–3, notes Odysseus' characteristically spare and unflinching awareness of the stark realities of warrior conflict (as evidenced in *Il.* 430–3, 450–5, 14. 83–7, 19. 226–33); also Odysseus' commitment to the Trojan war, like Diomedes', is total.

¹⁵⁴ However, Aristotle does not consider the case (intermediate between courage proper and 'civic' courage) of the internalized sense of the value of honour-conferring acts. The idea that honour is a proper response to virtue (but that the virtuous man does not specifically seek honour) is present in his account of *megalopsuchia* 'magnanimity' or 'pride' (NE 4. 3, esp. 1123^b20–4, 1124^a1–17). On the linkage between Aristotle's account of 'civic courage' and his conception of shame (*aidos*) in NE 3. 8 and EE 3. 1, see Belfiore (1992), 196–200.

and feelings, which is substantially different from that of any non-virtuous person.¹⁵⁵ But the point that I emphasize here (a crucial one in Stoic thinking) is that fundamental to proper ethical motivation is the realization that virtue is the only good and that, in comparison with this, the other so-called 'goods' (health, prosperity, and so on) are 'matters of indifference'. However, they combine this belief with the idea that virtue is properly expressed in selecting between these lesser 'goods', provided that the absolute priority of virtue is recognized. This, in turn, leads them to draw a distinction between two kinds of goal which are properly seen as the targets of virtuous activity. One is the intended result of a given act (that is, obtaining a lesser but natural 'good', such as continued life); the other is that of seeking this goal in a virtuous way. The key point is that the latter goal (acting in a virtuous way) is the primary and fundamental one, by comparison with which the achievement of the intended result is a 'matter of indifference'.¹⁵⁶

The potential relevance of this distinction to Homeric ethics has been pointed out by Malcolm Schofield. Discussing Hector, especially, he distinguishes between the intended result of heroic activities (winning the war, saving one's own life and that of one's family) and the overriding goal, which Schofield sees as being that of doing so in such a way that one achieves glory and avoids dishonour. As he puts it, 'From the point of view of honour, the defence of Troy merely provides the occasion or material for display of valour, just as for the Stoic conforming with nature by selecting the things that are natural for men to do and have simply provides the forum in which virtue can be practised.'¹⁵⁷ Odysseus' monologue indicates that the connection between Homeric and Stoic views on this point may be closer still. In Odysseus' deliberations, the knowledge of what is 'best' (by contrast with 'cowardly') in this situation renders other considerations (those connected with the preservation of life, 405-6) 'silent', or, in Stoic terms, 'matters of indifference'.¹⁵⁸ In other words, behaving in a virtuous (and honourable) way is the dominant and determining objective; that of achiev-

¹⁵⁵ See e.g. LS 59E-G, Q; 61A, B, O. On the question of the kind of socio-political context in which performing 'appropriate acts' constitutes the means to develop virtue (i.e. whether it is a conventional or ideal context), see 5.7 below, text to nn. 360-4; for an analogous question in Aristotle, see Ch. 4, n. 110.

¹⁵⁶ See LS 64 *passim*, and Striker (1986).

¹⁵⁷ Schofield (1986), 21, also p. 15.

¹⁵⁸ On 'silencing' considerations, see n. 145 above.

ing the intended result of fighting (maintaining life, winning) is also important, but in a secondary way. As I have already suggested, it may be rather misleading to take Odysseus' monologue (striking though it is) in isolation; and it is better to try to connect its stance with the concern with honour and shame which is explicit elsewhere. But the point still holds good that, in Homeric ethics, honour is seen as that which properly accrues to honourable or fine action; and performing honourable actions (rather than seeking honour) is the highest goal of heroic action, even at the risk of losing (what the Stoics call) 'primary natural goods' such as one's continued life.¹⁵⁹ In this respect, Odysseus' monologue is not so untypical; and the point of comparison between his stance and that of Stoic ethics is yet closer than Schofield suggests.

It might seem that the drift of the present argument is towards the assimilation of Homeric patterns of ethical motivation (and of the related aspects of Aristotelian and Stoic theory) to Kantian thinking. The kind of attitude that I am attributing to Odysseus, together with its analogues in Greek philosophy, may seem to be very close to that of giving priority to duty over inclination, an attitude seen by Kant as characteristic of a moral response, and as grounded by the categorical imperative.¹⁶⁰ It would be surprising, indeed, if there were *nothing* in common between the conceptions of ethical or moral motivation in these different contexts of European cultural history. But it remains my view that the larger frameworks of thinking in which these seemingly shared attitudes are contained are substantively different.

I discuss the relationship between Kant and the Greek theories later.¹⁶¹ But the core of my position can be stated by reference to the Homeric material; it follows from the point made earlier about Kantian and non-Kantian ethical approaches. As Snell recognizes, Odysseus' decision is not analysed appropriately in terms of an autonomous act or stance of self-binding to universal principles.¹⁶² Odysseus recognizes the priority of what is implied in 'being best' through engagement with the roles and practices in which such an

¹⁵⁹ For another aspect of Homeric ethics which is, arguably, comparable to the Stoic (and Aristotelian) understanding of ethical motivation, the performing of co-operative acts, including risking one's life, as a 'gratuitous', unforced gesture, see below 2.6, text to nn. 127-8, 134; 2.7, text to nn. 145-6.

¹⁶⁰ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 66-8, 71-5, 83-7.

¹⁶¹ See refs. in n. 129 above.

¹⁶² See text to n. 135 above.

ideal makes sense and not through self-universalizing abstraction from them. MacIntyre's thesis that virtue consists in fulfilling 'the goods internal to practices' is a better guide to what is involved than the Kantian model, since it accommodates both the idea that such roles and practices have real ethical weight and that realizing the goals of such practices is an intrinsic good as well as a means of living a worthwhile human life.¹⁶³ Also, Odysseus' rational-cum-emotional consistency, exhibited in his 'bear-like' fighting stance as well as in his mode of deliberation,¹⁶⁴ is better understood by reference to Williams's thoughts on the deep psychological roots of ethical motivation than to Kant's on the kind of rationality that abstracts from desire and inclination.¹⁶⁵

1.4 THE OTHER THREE MONOLOGUES

In the second monologue, that of Menelaus (Il. 17. 91–105), by contrast, considerations of shame, honour, and reproach form an integral part of the deliberative process.¹⁶⁶ Whereas Odysseus characterizes the option of flight as, simply, 'a very bad thing' (*mega . . . kakon*, 11. 404), Menelaus sees retreat as risking the indignation or disapproval (*nemesis*) of any of the Greeks who see it, particularly as Patroclus has fallen in Menelaus' cause, and for his 'honour' (*time*).¹⁶⁷ However, he weighs against this consideration the thought that, if he acts on this sense of shame (*aidestheis*), he may find himself surrounded, alone, by the many men that Hector leads.¹⁶⁸ It is a version of the second thought that proves decisive in Menelaus' case, by contrast with that of Odysseus. The general principle to which he refers is that of the disastrousness of fighting against the

¹⁶³ See MacIntyre (1985), 185–96, esp. 190–1; and text to nn. 110–12 above. Reference to the idea of living a certain kind of (human) life is clearer in the poetic second-order (reflective) reasoning discussed in 2.6–9 below; see e.g. 2.8, text to nn. 191–4.

¹⁶⁴ See n. 146 above.

¹⁶⁵ On these competing philosophical ideals, see text to nn. 114–16 above.

¹⁶⁶ Shame (*aidos*) is what one feels oneself; *nemesis* ('reproach', 'indignation', 'disapproval') is what is aroused in others by shameful acts. On the key role of these in the Homeric nexus of what Strawson (1974a) calls 'reactive attitudes' see Redfield (1975), 115–19; Williams (1993), 80–1; Cairns (1993), 52, 84–5, 98–100; Yamagata (1994), 156–75.

¹⁶⁷ Il. 17. 91–3; the fact that the other Greeks are fighting to confer 'honour' on Menelaus and Agamemnon is underlined by Achilles in Il. 1. 158–60.

¹⁶⁸ Il. 17. 94–6; Odysseus characterizes this possibility simply as 'more terrible' (*δύσινον*), 11. 405.

tide of fortune (or 'divine opposition', *πρὸς δαίμονα*) with a man whom a god honours. On this basis, he argues that none of the Greeks 'should disapprove' (*νεμεσῆσεται*), if he sees Menelaus retreating before Hector, who fights with divine help (100–1).¹⁶⁹ His decision is not, however, simply to retreat; it is rather to find Ajax and for them to return to battle together and see if they can (even in the face of divine opposition (*πρὸς δαίμονά περ*)) rescue Patroclus' corpse, this option presenting itself to Menelaus as 'the best of bad things' (*kakon phertaton*, 102–5).

Scholars are divided about whether Menelaus' response shows a degree of cowardice, or rather the kind of deliberative intelligence and strength of mind to resist adopting an ill-advised course of action because of a sense of shame (*aidestheis*, 95).¹⁷⁰ In support of the first view is the fact that Menelaus' clinching argument (that it is disastrous to fight against one honoured by a god) rests on an *interpretation* of events, about which no Homeric human figure can be certain; hence, Homeric figures react in very different ways to the impression that a god is working against them.¹⁷¹ In support of the second is the fact that Menelaus' judgement does seem to be borne out by events. Even Ajax, flanked by Menelaus, despairs of their surviving Hector's assault, and has to call for more help (17. 238–45).

What is crucial, in the present context, is to gauge the impact of the emphasis on public shame and disapproval in Menelaus' appraisal of his situation. In the light of Williams's analysis of a shame-culture, namely as one in which interactive attitudes are properly seen as a basis for ethical life (and in which such attitudes are often internalized),¹⁷² it may be wrong to see Menelaus' response as being characterized as ethically superficial. Menelaus' special position on the Greek side (it is, in a strong sense, *his* war), may be such as to make him, appropriately, aware of the shame involved in anything but total dedication to the war, and to the claims of his

¹⁶⁹ 17. 97–9; on the role of general principles in guiding Homeric deliberation, see 1.2 above, esp. text to nn. 77–9.

¹⁷⁰ See, for the first view, Voigt (1934), 92 ff.; Fenik (1978a), 86–9; and, for the second, Gaskin (1990), 8–9.

¹⁷¹ See Fenik (1978a), 88, citing Il. 17. 645–7, and 11. 317–19. Contrast also Agenor's reaction in 21. 569–70, see text to n. 180 below. In fact (apart from Zeus' general support for Hector at this stage), Apollo has just urged Hector on (75–81); but Menelaus does not know this, nor is it clear what difference Apollo's urging will make to the outcome of the battle.

¹⁷² See 1.3 above, text to nn. 120–5.

allies.¹⁷³ Although this point is not as explicit as in Hector's monologue, there is no suggestion that Menelaus' concern is *only* with public reaction to his actions. He himself recognizes that his retreat might be regarded as shameful (and hence that it might incur disapproval if it is seen); but this is not to say that he thinks that it would not be shameful if no one happened to be looking.¹⁷⁴ His concern is that the course of action that he chooses, as being 'the best of bad things' (105)¹⁷⁵ should not be *misinterpreted*. His concern presupposes both that others have a legitimate (reactive) interest in his response and that he himself feels the force of any judgement that might properly be made on his actions. He feels the force of it, that is, because he makes the same judgement on his own action.

Thus, I think that it would be wrong to take Menelaus' emphasis on shame and disapproval (in contrast to Odysseus' silence on this point) as evidence of an ethically shallow, and perhaps cowardly, character. On the other hand, I think that this difference would have some ethical significance in Homeric terms (as well as, of course, Aristotelian terms);¹⁷⁶ and that it does not simply denote, say, a difference in personal style between the two figures. Taken in the light of the other monologues, Odysseus' monologue represents an extreme in the extent to which simply doing what 'is best' is taken to be a decisive consideration, regardless of others' reactions. It is not inconsistent with the general understanding of Homeric ethics offered here (as constituted, in part at least, by a nexus of reactive attitudes) to see Odysseus' response as marking a high level of internalization of his society's ethics.

The ethical quality of Odysseus' response, as well as Menelaus', comes out more plainly if we contrast it with Agenor's (19. 553–70). Earlier, I suggested that much of the deliberation of the monologues can be understood as a type of means–end reasoning, directed at the goal (broadly speaking) of avoiding death without acting dis-

¹⁷³ The reference to the immediate objective, that of returning Patroclus' body to Achilles (104–5), may not be merely incidental in this connection.

¹⁷⁴ See, for comparable comments on Achilles' concern with shame and honour, Williams (1993), 81–2. Cairns (1993), 52, 85, also reads this passage as expressing an internalized sense of what shame and honour require. On Hector's internalized sense of shame, see text to nn. 186–8 below.

¹⁷⁵ The description of *both* courses of actions as 'evil' or 'bad' (*kakon*) implies that retreat is for him, as for Odysseus (11. 404–5), 'a bad thing', i.e. 'cowardly' or 'ignoble'.

¹⁷⁶ On Aristotle's distinction between courage proper and civic courage, see 1.3 above, text to n. 150.

honourably (and without incurring the disgrace that this involves).¹⁷⁷ Agenor's monologue is unique among the four in its concentration on the first part of this goal, avoiding death, at the expense of the second, acting honourably. Although Agenor ends up by standing his ground, he reaches this position, paradoxically, by reasoning which is directed solely at saving his life.¹⁷⁸ He rejects the option of running away (towards Troy) like the rest as carrying with it the certainty of future death at Achilles' hands. But the second option, that of running out into the plain of Troy, though it might yield an eventual escape to Troy, might well also lead to his being caught by Achilles. It is only the thought that both these ways of avoiding death will fail that leads him to try standing his ground, in that this offers at least some chance, however faint, of killing Achilles instead.¹⁷⁹ On the face of it, then, this monologue contains the least of what should count as ethically good motivation, either by the standards of Homeric ethics or of later Greek philosophical ethics.

The interest of Agenor's monologue in this connection lies mainly in the way that it brings out, by contrast, the more ethically motivated deliberations of the other monologues. The contrast with Hector's monologue, which comes not long after (22. 99–130), is especially pointed. In external form, Hector's monologue exhibits the same structure of reasoning as Agenor's. Like Agenor, he considers two options by which he might avoid confronting Achilles, and thus save his life, as his parents have just urged him to do. But, rejecting both options, he chooses to stand and fight as, apparently, offering some prospect of victory and continued life.¹⁸⁰ Like Agenor, he thus reaches the decision to stand his ground by the oblique route of rejecting life-saving courses of action,¹⁸¹ though in doing so (unlike Agenor) he makes a decision that expresses his courage, as shown

¹⁷⁷ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 83–4.

¹⁷⁸ Relatedly, this is the monologue in which the prospect of death, and its violent connotations, are most explicit (see 555, 565, and 568–9). The phrase *ἀνάγκη δειροτομήναι* (555) might seem to carry a negative evaluation of the option of flight; Lattimore translates 'will . . . cut my throat like a coward's'; but the adjective may signify rather 'weak' (LSJ); thus, I translate, 'since I am too weak to stop him'.

¹⁷⁹ There is a partial parallel to this line of reasoning in *Il.* 22. 99–130, discussed in text to nn. 200–2 below.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. 21. 553–5, 556–66 (interrupted by the formulaic 562), 567–70, with 22. 99–110, 111–28 (interrupted by the formulaic 122); the phraseology of the concluding words in each case (22. 570 and 22. 130) underlines the similarity.

¹⁸¹ As Fenik (1978a), 83, suggests, this point is reflected in the fact that he does not stick by his decision but soon runs away (22. 131–8).

elsewhere. But this similarity of external form only serves to underline more clearly the different character of Hector's deliberations. In each of the stages of these deliberations, Hector's reasoning is informed by ethical attitudes which are derived, in various ways, from his engagement with his familial and communal role.

In the first instance, unlike Agenor, Hector has an available course of action for saving his life: he can simply go inside the gates of Troy. He also has honourable reasons for adopting this course of action. As his father, Priam, underlines, there is a case for seeing retreat as the proper exercise of Hector's role as a son and as Troy's defender: 'Come inside the wall, my son, so that you can save the Trojans and Trojan women and not give great glory [*kudos*] to Peleus' son and yourself be robbed of your own life.'¹⁸² What prevents him from doing so is his sense of shame at having to retreat into Troy under such circumstances. How, exactly, should we understand this sense of shame? Adkins and Snell, approaching the question from their post-Cartesian and post-Kantian standpoints, seek to minimize the ethical status of this response. Adkins presents the monologue as an illustration of Homer's inability to distinguish between a 'mistake' and a 'moral error' (the latter being taken to involve an act of will and to provide grounds for a sense of guilt). He takes Hector to be expressing his disgrace at having made the mistaken judgement that led to his defeat.¹⁸³ Adkins does not refer explicitly to the fact that Hector's shame is expressed in terms of the imagined judgements of other Trojans; but he would, presumably, take this as support for his general view that what matters in Homer is winning reputation and not losing face, and that Homeric ethics have no other foundations than this.¹⁸⁴ Analogously, Snell dismisses Wolff's attempt to see the monologue as an expression of *tragische Schuld* ('tragic guilt'), on the grounds that the Homeric thought-world lacks the conceptual basis to present the psychological and moral capaci-

¹⁸² *Il.* 22. 56–8; see also the appeal to Hector's sense of *aidos* in 82 and, by implication, 59–65.

¹⁸³ Adkins (1960), 47–8. On Adkins's assumptions, see 1.1 above, text to nn. 26–30, 35–6; also 1.3 above, n. 121. Adkins's distinction between 'mistake' and 'moral error' reflects Kant's distinction between 'prudential' and 'moral' considerations. (1.1. above, text to n. 31.)

¹⁸⁴ Adkins (1960), 47–9, esp. 49: '... facts are of much less importance than appearances [i.e. 'what people will say', p. 48]; and hence ... intentions are of much less importance than results. The Homeric hero cannot fall back upon his own opinion of himself, for his self only has the value which other people put on it.'

ties that Snell sees as central in the tragic framework: the self-conscious exercise of moral freedom and the struggle against necessity.¹⁸⁵

Leaving aside for the moment any reservations we may have about the ethical standpoint presupposed by Snell and Adkins,¹⁸⁶ Adkins's reading, in particular, ignores some substantial counter-indications about Hector's motivation.

But now, since I have destroyed the people by my recklessness [*ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ἐμῇσιν*], I feel shame [*aideomai*] before the Trojans and the Trojan women with their trailing dresses, and am frightened that someone who is worse than me [*kakoteros*] will say: 'Hector relied on his own strength and destroyed his people.' (22. 104–7)

What is clear from these lines is that Hector's shame is a response not so much to personal defeat and loss of honour as to the fact that he (on whom Troy's defence principally depends) has 'destroyed his people', and done so 'by my own recklessness', in ignoring Polydamas' advice and relying on his own strength at a crucial moment of battle.¹⁸⁷ Hector's shame does not just derive from the fact that he must face the reproaches of the Trojans (including the wives and other relatives of those whose death he caused) if he goes into Troy (105–7). He himself accepts that he was wrong to reject Polydamas' advice, and that it was because of his 'recklessness' that these lives have been lost (103–4). The thought that he must face Polydamas and the Trojans, and that he will be (rightly) open to criticism from 'someone who is worse than me' makes his sense of shame more intense, so much so that the alternative of confronting Achilles seems preferable, even if it involves his dying ('nobly', or 'in glory', *ἐὐκλειῶς*) in defence of the city (108–10). But the sense of shame is one that he already feels; it will not cease to exist if Hector avoids going into the city. The fact that Hector deliberates in this way shows that he has internalized the reactive attitudes that are central to Homeric ethical life. The Trojan men and women, and the inferior critic, whose reactions he imagines, play the role of the

¹⁸⁵ Snell (1930), 150–1; see 1.1 above, text to nn. 6–10, 21–2.

¹⁸⁶ For such reservations, see 1.3 above, text to nn. 107–25; see also text to nn. 189–95 below.

¹⁸⁷ Hector is referring to *Il.* 18. 249–313; on this incident, see Redfield (1975), 143–53; Schofield (1986), 18–22.

'internalized other' whose importance in the ethics of shame is stressed by Williams.¹⁸⁸

The latter point brings out the main idea that I want to emphasize in connection with this monologue: that, if we adopt a more appropriate ethical and psychological framework than that presupposed by Snell and Adkins, we can see how this monologue does, within the relevant type of framework, display a kind of sense of responsibility and self-consciousness. Reference to the 'participant' ethical framework proposed by Williams and others provides part of what we need to make sense of this.¹⁸⁹ It is also useful to refer again to a non-Cartesian analysis of self-consciousness by the functionalist philosopher of mind, Daniel Dennett. He presents self-consciousness not as a standard accompaniment of all mental states (as it is in the Cartesian model) but as a characteristic of certain, rather exceptional, psychological states in which the person internalizes the kind of dialogue (including the dialogue of ethical persuasion) that is normally conducted with others. This idea has, of course, very general philosophical implications; but, as I have suggested already, it may help to provide the basis for understanding the (non-Cartesian) psychological model assumed in the Homeric monologues, and the sense in which they express 'consciousness' or 'self-consciousness'.¹⁹⁰

In the light of these ethical and psychological models, the first stage of Hector's monologue (99–110) can be seen, in part, as an expression of his consciousness of responsibility for the deaths of so many Trojans, and thus of the ethical impossibility of adopting the course of action advocated by Priam.¹⁹¹ The fact that Hector expresses this partly in terms of the imagined comments of the Trojans affected by his actions (107) is appropriate both to the ethical and the psychological framework involved. Ethically, as proposed

¹⁸⁸ See Williams (1993), 81–8 (discussed in 1.3 above, text to nn. 120–5); Williams does not discuss Hector's monologue specifically. For a similar reading of the passage to that offered here, see Cairns (1993), 81–2. See also *Il.* 6. 441–6, which expresses Hector's internalization of the reactive judgements (shame and honour) that are appropriately made on his actions. On Hector's high level of awareness of these reactive judgements, see Martin (1989), 133–8.

¹⁸⁹ See refs. in n. 188 above, and, more generally, 1.3 above, text to nn. 110–25.

¹⁹⁰ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 98–104 and n. 100; also text to nn. 58–61. For a further application of Dennett's thinking to the interpretation of a Homeric monologue, see 3.2 below, text to nn. 35–43. On non-Cartesian conceptions of responsibility, see Dennett (1976), 191.

¹⁹¹ See text to n. 182 above.

earlier, the imagined Trojan spokesman represents the 'internalized other' who articulates the reactive judgement that, as Hector has already acknowledged, is properly made on his action.¹⁹² In the kind of psychological model suggested by Dennett, this figure also serves as an articulation of Hector's self-consciousness, in so far as it shows Hector converting into internal dialogue the kind of action-guiding judgement that normally forms part of interpersonal dialogue. Similar points can be made about the way in which Hector characterizes the earlier action which is the subject of these imagined reactive judgements. Although this action is presented as one for which Hector is responsible, and blameworthy, since it exhibited 'recklessness' (104), it is not characterized in the terms that Adkins and Snell would require for a responsible action: namely, by identifying a crucial mental state (a decision by a self-conscious 'I' or an act of will) which could serve as the basis for a properly moral action.¹⁹³ Rather, it is characterized as the outcome of a process of interpersonal deliberation, in which Polydamas 'told me to lead the Trojans inside the city . . . [but] I did not take any notice of him', more literally, 'I did not obey him' or 'was not persuaded by him', *ἔγω οὐ πειθόμην*, 101–3).¹⁹⁴ We may take it that, as elsewhere in Homer, this interpersonal dialogue, like the deliberative monologues, represents a way of articulating psychological motivation.¹⁹⁵ But, as I have suggested in 1.2, this motivation is better analysed in terms of action-guiding reasons and practical reasoning than of self-conscious acts of will. Also, as argued in 1.3, the ethical content of such reasoning is better analysed by reference to engagement with a determinate interpersonal and communal role than to the autonomous commitment to universal principles required by Snell and Adkins.

In other words, Hector's monologue expresses the kind of sense of responsibility and self-consciousness that is appropriate to an 'objective' (non-subject-centred) psychological framework and a 'participant' ethical framework. The kind of 'self' of which he is conscious is that of a psychological agent who acts on the basis of reasons and reasoning, and whose reasoning about future actions is shaped by the consequences of his past actions. The 'self' involved is

¹⁹² See text to nn. 187–8 above.

¹⁹³ See text to nn. 183–5, and more generally 1.1, above.

¹⁹⁴ For the relevant action, see refs. in n. 187 above.

¹⁹⁵ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 60–1.

also an ethical agent whose reasons and reasoning are informed by the action-guiding beliefs of his community and by his engagement with his social role. It is this kind of 'self' of which Hector's monologue shows 'consciousness', and whose 'responsibility' is acknowledged. This kind of self-consciousness is displayed partly, as suggested, by the significant use of internalized dialogue. It is also displayed by other distinctive features of this exceptionally extended monologue. One is the use of the deliberative formula, 'that would be much better', first, in a varied form, to denote what *would have been* much better (*ἄν πολὺ κέρδιον ἦεν*), namely, that he should have taken note of Polydamas (103); and then, to describe a course of action (killing or dying in battle) which 'would be much better' (*ἄν πολὺ κέρδιον εἴη*) only because of his shame at *not* having done what was better before (108–10).¹⁹⁶ Secondly, the relatively complex grammatical structure of the lines, with their significant mix of tenses and grammatical moods, articulates Hector's shameful acknowledgement of the present and likely future consequences of his past actions.¹⁹⁷ One, at least, of the implications of these formal features¹⁹⁸ is to underline characteristics of adult human life which, as noted earlier, are also stressed by Aristotle. Adult human practical reasoning typically involves a sense of time (past, present, and future), and of living a life (a single, and, in principle, cohesive life) over time. Adult human reasoning is also properly informed by a sense of the appropriate, or 'mean' response (the belief, emotion, and action) that derives from the nexus of interpersonal and communal relationships in which one is engaged.¹⁹⁹ When Hector imagines the reactions that others *will* make to what he *has* done if he re-enters the city, he draws the conclusion that it *would* be better to kill or die in battle (although this is not what *would have been better* absolutely) than to fail to register the force of their (justified) response and the shame that it entails. The grammar of the lines, as well as the internalized dialogue, thus expresses the kind of self-conscious responsibility that is consistent with the relevant type of understanding of human beings as psycho-ethical agents.

Hector's reflection on his first option, then, simply leads him back

¹⁹⁶ On formulaic patterns in Homeric deliberation, see refs. in n. 58 above.

¹⁹⁷ Tenses: future (100), past (101–3, 104), present (105); moods: subjunctive and optative (103, 106, 108). For a translation of lines 99–110, see 1.2 above, p. 49.

¹⁹⁸ For another, see text to nn. 208–9 below.

¹⁹⁹ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 85–7; 1.3 above, text to nn. 137–40.

to the terrible confrontation with Achilles before him (108–10). His second line of thought, while also directed at saving his life, is equally different from the equivalent part of Agenor's monologue.²⁰⁰ He thinks of taking off his armour, and offering to make a peace-treaty with Achilles, involving the return of Helen and the handing over of all Troy's wealth (111–21). This differs from Agenor's second strategy not only in that it presupposes Hector's special political role, and the threat posed to Troy by his death. It also differs in that Hector's proposal has an ethical basis: as he himself points out, Paris' removal of Helen and her possessions was 'the beginning of the quarrel' (116), and so to effect their return would be to make good a wrong as well as to save his own life. Indeed, Hector's second option can be seen as, in ethical terms, consequentially related to the first. The option of retreating into Troy is ruled out by the fact of Hector's shame at the results of his 'recklessness'. His second option is, in effect, a response to the more generalized shame felt by Paris' family at the disastrous consequences for Troy of Paris' recklessness.²⁰¹ Nothing can be done now to compensate for the first reason for shame; but Hector imagines, at least briefly, that something can be done to compensate for the second, and done in a way that will save his life with honour. What leads Hector to break off this line of thought is not the realization that it is ethically wrong, but that it is irrelevant to the reality of his situation. Achilles is no longer fighting Hector as the leader of the Trojans but as the killer of Patroclus; and so the kind of peace-treaty that Hector has in mind will mean nothing to Achilles. If Hector strips off his armour, there will be no basis for dialogue, as Hector acknowledges in the poignant imagery of 126–8.²⁰² It is the termination of this line of thought that leads Hector, abruptly, to decide to settle the issue by conflict (129–30).

The features of Hector's reasoning discussed so far, in both stages of the monologue, need to be borne in mind if we are to appraise properly the quality of the ethical motivation presented there. On the face of it, if we compare Hector's monologue with Odysseus', rather than Agenor's, Odysseus comes off much better. Odysseus' knowledge of what a chieftain should do, if he is to 'be best'

²⁰⁰ See text to nn. 180–1 above.

²⁰¹ For an earlier attempt to remove this shame and the trouble that it has caused, see II. 3. 39–94.

²⁰² Achilles will kill him 'like a woman', a form of interchange characterized by contrast with the 'whispering' intimacies (*δαριζέμεναι* . . . *δαρίζετον*) of boy and girl in such locations (125–8); see also Redfield (1975), 158; Richardson (1993), 119–21.

(*aristeuein*) is sufficient to make him stand his ground without further deliberation; in this respect, his motivation lends itself readily to analysis in terms of Aristotelian and Stoic models of virtue.²⁰³ In Hector's case, the weight of his deliberation falls on exploring means to save his life, and the decision to stand his ground (Odysseus' decision) emerges as a last resort, and as one which is weakly maintained.²⁰⁴ But to end the comparison there would be to ignore relevant similarities and differences between the two monologues. For one thing, as suggested earlier, Odysseus' motivation is also best conceived as inhering in the desire to act honourably. He too wants to act in a way that would properly win the reactive judgement of honour from his fellow chieftains (whether or not they do, in fact, make such judgements). Hector's deliberations, like Menelaus', to some extent (and in pointed contrast to Agenor's), are directed at saving his life in a way that is compatible with acting honourably; and, to this extent, his motivation is essentially similar to Odysseus'.²⁰⁵

Also, although Hector adopts in a more reluctant way the course of action which Odysseus takes to be, unequivocally, the mark of one who is to 'be best', there is more scope for debate, in Hector's case, about what 'being best' involves in this situation. His dilemma is more 'all or nothing' than Odysseus'. If he fights and kills Achilles, he saves both himself and Troy (at least, for the present); if he dies, his death entails the destruction of his family and city.²⁰⁶ As Priam underlines, Hector's role as the defender of his family and 'the Trojans and Trojan women' is, arguably, best fulfilled by retreat.²⁰⁷ When Hector, in his monologue, says that a sense of shame prevents him from facing those same 'Trojans and Trojan women' (because of his failure to rescue their people in the past, 104–5) he is, in effect,

²⁰³ See 1.3 above, text to nn. 144–59.

²⁰⁴ Hector stands his ground briefly before running away (22. 131–8).

²⁰⁵ See 1.3 above, text to nn. 151–3. The same point emerges even more clearly in *Il.* 6. 441–65. Although Hector, unlike Odysseus, expresses his (internalized) sense of the reactive judgements of shame and honour that would be made appropriately on his actions (see n. 188 above), he couples this with the statement, 'I have learned to be noble [or 'brave', *esthlos*] and to fight always among the first [*πρώτοι*]' of the Trojans' (444–5); see also *ἀριστεύεσκε μάχεσθαι*, 'was always the best at fighting' (460). *Il.* 6. 444–5 is similar in formulation to Odysseus' statement in *Il.* 11. 408–9.

²⁰⁶ Also, Hector's isolation is much greater than Odysseus'. Odysseus' stand forms part of a continuing larger battle; and he can, when wounded, call for help (11. 461–72) in a way that Hector cannot.

²⁰⁷ See text to n. 182 above.

disputing his father's presentation of re-entering the city as the most honourable course of action. But the fact that he twice considers a way of acting that is consistent with his father's advice shows the weight that he gives to the thought that he should perpetuate his life and his role as the defender of his family and city and that he could do so with honour. Thus, the fact that he is slow to reject the option which Odysseus rejects so quickly does not necessarily signify inferiority in the quality of his motivation.

But the most substantial difference between the two cases derives from a further feature of Hector's monologue and one which can also be taken as showing a kind of self-consciousness. This is the consciousness that the present consequences of his past actions make it impossible for him to pursue future courses of action which would realize his overall goal of continuing his life in an honourable way. This consciousness is also displayed in the form of the monologue. It is Hector's recognition that 'it would have been much better' for him to have taken Polydamas' advice, which forces him now to conclude that 'it would be better' to fight Achilles, and perhaps be killed by him, than to re-enter the city (though there is a clear respect in which it would *not* be better). In the second part of the monologue, it is the recognition that the killing of Patroclus rules out the possibility of coming to terms with Achilles that makes him conclude that it is 'better' to fight him as soon as possible.²⁰⁸ These phrases, positioned as they are in the monologue, do not simply exhibit the reasoning by which Hector reaches these conclusions. Forming as they do a pointed contrast to the courses of action considered, they show how Hector is, and sees that he is, forced into a conflict that he has good reason to avoid. Thus, a further kind of consciousness that the monologue displays is that he is trapped; and that the decision to fight is forced on him by the logic of events rather than the logic of his own goal-directed reasoning. The way in which the conclusion (that he must fight) emerges both consequentially, and with a reluctant awkwardness, from his reasoning expresses precisely the character of his predicament.²⁰⁹

This dimension of Hector's situation is of the type that makes scholars inclined to see him as a 'tragic' figure.²¹⁰ This raises the question of the ethical framework in which we can define most

²⁰⁸ See 22. 103, 108, 129; see also text to nn. 196–7 above.

²⁰⁹ On the structure of the monologue, see text to nn. 180–1, 196–7, 208, above.

²¹⁰ See e.g. Redfield's way of formulating this idea: 2.3 below, text to nn. 60–2.

effectively this aspect of Hector's predicament. I think that it is clear that the post-Cartesian and post-Kantian frameworks presupposed by Snell and Adkins do not provide what is required. Snell, as noted earlier, dismisses Wolff's claim that Hector's monologue expresses 'tragic guilt', on the grounds that Hector (like other Homeric figures) does not possess the kind of self-conscious agency, and the ability to make 'genuine personal decisions', that is characteristic of the tragic thought-world. Adkins focuses rather on the fact that Hector's monologue shows the Homeric failure to distinguish between a 'mistake' of judgement and a 'moral error'. Informing both these views, in different ways, are the Kantian ideas that the sole determinant of the moral quality of an action is that of the intention that underlies it, and that to be a 'person' (or a rational being) is to be free, at a fundamental level, to make the morally right decision, whatever the circumstances.²¹¹ What is striking about Hector's monologue, as analysed here, is that he both is, and is not, a free agent. Although he must decide, and wants to decide honourably, he must decide in a context in which, as he realizes, all the honourable options (except one) are foreclosed. He is thus free to deliberate, but not free to adopt either of the actions which would represent the outcome of these deliberations.²¹² This is not a dilemma whose ethical character is well captured by the Kantian framework.

A key feature of Williams's ethical thinking has been the critique of the Kantian ideas just noted, especially the radical distinction between factual or prudential and moral considerations presupposed by Adkins.²¹³ Williams has deployed the very un-Kantian ideas of 'moral luck' and 'agent regret' to convey the thought that the moral dimension in a situation is not confined to the quality of the agent's intentions.²¹⁴ He has also claimed that Greek epic and tragedy (rather than Greek philosophy) are of special value to contemporary thinkers because these genres communicate the force of these un-Kantian ethical ideas, a claim that has been both developed and

²¹¹ See text to nn. 183–5 above; 1.1 above, esp. text to nn. 20–3, 26–36; also 6.6 below, text to nn. 150–2.

²¹² Hector can neither re-enter the city (99–110) nor make terms with Achilles (111–28); see text to nn. 208–9 above.

²¹³ See n. 183 above.

²¹⁴ Roughly speaking, 'moral luck' conveys the idea that the rightness or wrongness of actions is determined not only by the moral quality of the intentions of the agent, but also by the agent's success and failure in the project undertaken. To this degree, an element of 'intrinsic' or 'constitutive' luck is inseparable from ethical life. See Williams (1981a), ch. 2, esp. 22–6.

qualified by Martha Nussbaum.²¹⁵ Most relevant here is the suggestion that the tragic depiction of the self-blinding Oedipus and of Heracles after his madness conveys, in a highly intense form, the kind of 'regret' that an agent properly feels about actions which he performed but did not perform intentionally. On Kantian grounds, such agents have no reason to feel a sense of responsibility or guilt; but Williams argues that the tragedies convey the thought that an agent should, in such cases, register fully the moral force of the fact that *he* performed these actions, and feel a proper regret for the actions thus 'owned'.²¹⁶

Hector's ethical situation is not precisely similar to that of Oedipus and Heracles in this respect: he is not regretting, and accepting a kind of liability for, actions performed unintentionally. But, by going to meet Achilles, he is 'owning', and accepting liability for, the consequences of a series of actions which are not uniformly based on blameworthy intentions. The action which rules out the first honourable option that he considers, the rejection of Polydamas' advice at a crucial moment of battle, he now accepts as blameworthy (though it did not seem so to him at the time).²¹⁷ But he does not present as blameworthy the killing of the enemy Patroclus, though this action now plays a decisive role in ruling out the second honourable option that he considers.²¹⁸ Nor, of course, is he blameworthy as an individual for the seizure of Helen, which is identified as the cause of the the Trojan War and hence of the killing of Patroclus which rules out this second option.²¹⁹ But it is the consequences of this interrelated series of actions that he, while regretting, 'owns' in his deliberations, and accepts the implication, that he must go to fight, and probably be killed by, his enemy. Williams's category of 'agent regret' captures the combination of agency and passivity, regret and

²¹⁵ See e.g. Williams (1981a), 30 n. 2; (1981b), 252–3; (1993), 158–60; also refs. in n. 216 below. Nussbaum (1986) reinforces this claim as regards Greek tragedy (chs. 2, 3, 13), but highlights also an awareness of the importance of moral luck in Aristotle and (in a complex and ambivalent way) in Plato too; see her pp. 18–19. See also 6.6 below, esp. text to nn. 161–94, which suggests a larger role for moral luck in Greek philosophical thinking about individual responsibility for becoming virtuous than Williams allows (despite his brief comment on the element of 'constitutive luck' in determining whether or not one would become a sage (1981a), 20).

²¹⁶ Williams (1993), 68–74, 133–5.

²¹⁷ *Il.* 22. 101–3 (referring to 18. 249–313), discussed in text to nn. 186–99 above.

²¹⁸ *Il.* 22. 123–8, alluding, without self-criticism, to 16. 818–61 (the killing of Patroclus is signalled as potentially disastrous for Hector in 16. 852–4, but is not therefore presented as expressing 'recklessness' on his part).

²¹⁹ See *Il.* 22. 110–20, esp. 116, taken with text to nn. 201–2 above.

acknowledgement of responsibility, that is involved in this kind of predicament²²⁰ in a way that is not true of the Kantian categories presupposed by Snell and Adkins.

Williams focuses on the contrast between the person as agent (performer of actions) and as locus of intentions. But Hector's predicament also presupposes other features noticed earlier as relevant to the Homeric framework of thinking. It is as someone thoroughly engaged in, and committed by, his role as a social participant, as brother of Paris, and chief defender of Troy, that Hector must own the interrelated consequences of these actions; he does not do so as an individual agent taken in isolation from his social role. Also, it is as a human being who lives a life of social participation over time (and who may who, over time, come to see differently the moral character and implications of his actions) that Hector does so, rather than as the locus of intentions which are, at the relevant time, self-evidently right or wrong.²²¹ This further aspect of Hector's predicament underlines the point that his ethical attitudes and motivation are not inferior to Odysseus'.²²² Rather, what is presented in the monologue are attitudes and motivation of similar quality in a situation of much greater ethical complexity.

For the most part, in this chapter, I have considered separately the question of the psychological and the ethical models that are embodied in the deliberative monologues. I have argued, on the one hand, that Homeric psychological patterns are best understood in the light of a non-subject-centred (and, specifically, non-Cartesian) model of mind, and, on the other, that the ethical patterns are best understood in the light of a non-Kantian model, centred on the idea of full-hearted engagement with a communal role. However, the discussion has also indicated some of the ways in which these two questions are interconnected; for instance, the monologues can be seen as illustrating the idea that internalized (ethical) reactive attitudes function also as action-guiding beliefs and thus as a form of

²²⁰ See e.g. Williams (1993), 70 (on Oedipus): 'What *has happened* to him, in fact, is that he *brought it about*' (my italics replacing Williams's), and refs. in n. 216 above. See also Williams (1981a), 27: 'The constitutive thought of regret . . . is something like "how much better if it had been otherwise"' (expressed, in 'agent regret', as the wish that one had *acted* differently). On the role of the idea 'it would have been much better [if I had acted differently]' in Hector's monologue, esp. 22. 103, see text to nn. 208–9 above.

²²¹ See text to n. 199 above.

²²² See also text to nn. 203–9 above.

motivation.²²³ In the case of Hector's monologue, in particular, I have suggested that the expression of internalized reactive attitudes in the form of internal dialogue is indicative both of the ethical and the psychological framework involved; and that both of these frameworks need to be kept in mind in defining the kind of self-consciousness and sense of responsibility represented in the monologue.²²⁴ In later chapters, I go further in exploring the interplay between an objective psychological model, a participant ethical model, and, in Greek philosophy at least, an objectivist approach to norms and knowledge.²²⁵ The discussion of Hector's monologue has also prefigured the principal topic of the next chapter, that of finding an appropriate framework in which to place the kind of ethical complexity involved in the portrayal of the key figures of Greek epic and tragedy at key moments.

²²³ See e.g. 1.3 above, text to nn. 144–54; and text to nn. 172–5 above; also 1.2, text to nn. 77–89, 92–7; 1.3, text to nn. 117, 124–5.

²²⁴ See text to nn. 186–99 above.

²²⁵ On the interplay between an objective psychological model and a participant ethical model in Greek epic and tragedy, see Ch. 3, esp. 3.1. On objectivism as an explicit feature of Greek philosophy, perhaps implied in Greek poetry, see 4.7 below, text to nn. 273–8.

2

Being a Hero

2.1 THE PROBLEMATIC HERO

In the preceding chapter, I have used the distinction between subjective (specifically, post-Cartesian) and objective psychological models and between individualist (specifically, post-Kantian) and participant ethical models to identify certain positions in the debate about the character of Homeric deliberation, and to contribute to that debate. I have also used the discussion of the patterns of practical reasoning and ethical motivation embodied in the Iliadic deliberative monologues to give some illustration of what is involved in the claim that an objective-participant conception of the person underlies Greek poetry and philosophy.

In this chapter, I approach in a broadly similar way a related issue: that of the conceptual and interpretative framework in which to place the idea of the 'problematic hero' who figures in many readings of the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy. Here too, I identify certain critical positions which are informed by subjective-individualist conceptions of the person. I also use certain passages from the *Iliad* and tragedy to give further illustration of what is implied in an 'objective-participant' conception of the person. In this and the following chapter, I explore the relationship between themes which are treated separately in Chapter 1: the understanding of human motivation in terms of reasons and reasoning, and the understanding of ethical motivation in terms of engagement with interpersonal or communal roles and practices. I am especially interested in the idea that the objective-participant conception (as well as the subjective-individualist one) gives scope for the idea of a type of 'second-order' reasoning, involving reflection on the proper overall goals of a human life.¹ I think that a good deal of what is problematic about the

problematic heroes of Greek epic and tragedy inheres in the fact that they are provoked by their situation into engaging in second-order reasoning of a type which guides their emotional responses and leads them to act in a way that seems unacceptable or unreasonable by normal standards of interpersonal behaviour. The connections between Greek poetic and Greek philosophical thinking about the relationship between first- and second-order reasoning are deep and interesting; and I pursue them in subsequent chapters.²

The idea that certain key figures of the *Iliad* and tragedy are, in some special way, problematic is one which is familiar in contemporary critical discussion. Indeed, the idea is so much associated with some specifically contemporary intellectual approaches (such as structuralism) that it may seem to be, peculiarly, a product of our own era and thought-world.³ However, the idea that the presentation of key figures in the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy raises special problems (bearing especially on the relationship between our ethical judgements on the figures and our emotional responses to them) has a long history, and one that goes back, arguably, to Greek culture itself; and I note some versions of this idea shortly (2.2 below).

It is also an idea which follows naturally from the discussion of the previous chapter, especially that of Hector's monologue (1.4 above). In considering the ethical motivation embodied in the Iliadic monologues, I have assumed that the *Iliad* represents the kind of fictional context in which it is reasonable to look for ethical or moral motivation. Indeed, I think that the previous discussion (1.3-4) helps to substantiate this assumption; it suggests ways in which we can understand the framework of thinking involved as being a properly ethical framework, and not as a primitive or defective version of *moral* thinking (on a post-Kantian understanding of morality). However, the discussion of Hector, in particular, raises questions of special interest in this connection, deriving both from the ethical complexity of Hector's response to his situation, and from the fullness with which this is expressed in the monologue. Hector's response is rather difficult to 'place' ethically; it is less easy to characterize his response as courageous (or not) than that of Odysseus.

² See *Introd.*, text to nn. 59-61.

¹ On contrastingly subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of second-order reasoning, see 6.3 below. On the relevant sense of 'objective-participant' in this chapter see n. 75 below.

³ The idea reflects the tendency in some contemporary approaches (esp. structuralist and semiotic) to find ethically neutral and non-engaged ways of formulating issues which have traditionally been characterized in terms that involve (engaged) ethical judgements. See further discussion of Redfield (1975) in 2.3 below, esp. text to nn. 57 and 63.

While a key part of Hector's response derives from the fact that he blames himself (for his 'recklessness', *Il.* 22. 100–7), his response to this fact is of a type (permeated by the desire to act honourably) which does not seem to be presented as blameworthy. A further level of complexity is raised, as we have seen, by his status as an agent. On the one hand, he deliberates, as one whose actions depend on the outcome of his deliberations. On the other, the framing of his deliberations includes the way in which (as he sees it) his options are foreclosed and the outcome constrained by factors that he can no longer determine; and this too is a point which bears on our ethical appraisal of his response. Relevant also is the way in which this unusually extended and distinctively shaped monologue (placed as it is at a crucial moment in the narrative) disposes us towards a high level of sympathetic engagement with Hector of a kind that colours our view of him and his situation.⁴

These features of Hector's monologue are typical of the presentation of key figures at key moments in the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy: they encapsulate some, at least, of the features that make such figures 'problematic' in the sense relevant to the present discussion. I have offered elsewhere a formulation in general terms of what is typical of the characterization of *Iliadic* and tragic figures; and this formulation may also serve as a (partial) specification of what makes them problematic.⁵ I have suggested that these figures are presented, at the relevant moments, with a certain type of ambivalence or complexity (which invites a corresponding complexity in our responses) in three principal respects. One is that of ethical appraisal: the figure is presented in a way that makes it difficult to reach a definitive ethical judgement on her action and attitudes. In some cases, though not in the case of Hector, this difficulty arises from a tension between the standards of judgement used by the other figures in their—often negative—characterization of the figure and the standards that the problematic hero proposes or presupposes.⁶

⁴ See 1.4 above, text to nn. 186–222. See also Taplin (1992), 230–9.

⁵ See Gill (1990b); also Gill (1986), on tragic characterization. On *Il.*, rather than *Od.*, as anticipating tragedy in this respect, see Gill (1990b), 9–17; on ancient views of the contrast between *Il.* and *Od.*, in respects relevant to this question, see Gill (1984), 149–51, 162–5. On *Il.* as a 'tragic' poem, and *Od.* as an 'ethical' one, see Rutherford (1982) and (1986).

⁶ In Hector's case, the problem derives rather from the fact that Hector feels only too keenly the force of the negative judgements which (he thinks) others will make on him (*Il.* 22. 99–110), and that his sense of this forces him to enter a conflict which he

Another respect is that of psychological agency or passivity. The figure is presented in a way that combines (sometimes puzzlingly) contrary indications about the extent to which she should be seen either as a psychological agent or as subject to forces deriving from the situation or from herself (or both). These two types of complexity are related to each other, and also to the third type. Despite the fact that the figure is 'problematic' in these respects, she is presented in a way that gives her a special place in our sympathetic interest, and that does not consist simply in the fact that she serves as a focus of narrative interest at the relevant moment. Rather, the special status of the figure in this respect derives from her role as the vehicle of our engagement with the questions or 'problems' which the poem as a whole explores.⁷

This may serve as a formulation of the features that make such figures problematic; I now offer an explanatory framework for those features of epic and tragic representation, and one which illuminates the conception of the person underlying the representation. I do so, primarily, by a detailed discussion of the ethical attitudes and psychological states of two supremely problematic heroes, Homer's Achilles, and Euripides' Medea, as displayed in certain key speeches. But, before doing so, I explain the general form of my analysis, and the way in which this fits into my larger project. I do so by stating my position on an issue which has figured since Antiquity in critical discussions of Greek epic and tragedy (and of comparable forms of modern literature), an issue to which some of my earlier discussions may also be taken as contributions.⁸ This is the question whether the special kind of sympathetic response that we give to *Iliadic* and tragic figures at key (problematic) moments is to be understood as being dependent on our ethical judgements of the figures, in conflict with them, or quite independent of them.

This issue is posed, in a particularly stark form, by the contrasting

has good reason to avoid; see 1.4 above, text to nn. 186–99. For conflicts about the standard of ethical judgement to be applied, see discussion of Achilles and Medea in 2. 6–9 below; also 3.3–5 below.

⁷ See Gill (1990b), 18–19, 30–31; and see further 2.4 below. On the distinct, and more limited, question of the role of key figures as narrative focuses or focalizers, see Chatman (1986), discussing Genette's theory; Bayley (1974); and Gill (1990b), 7–8. A different, but complementary, way of understanding the mixture of agency and passivity in the presentation of tragic figures (by reference to a specific type of psychological-cum-religious world-view) is offered by Padel (1992).

⁸ Gill (1986) and (1990b).

accounts by Plato and Aristotle of our ethical and emotional responses to epic and tragic representation. I also consider two contrasting types of modern position on this issue. One position (of which I take S. H. Butcher and A. C. Bradley as representing different versions) is that the special kind of sympathetic response that we give to problematic tragic heroes is a response to the power of 'personality', in some sense, of a kind that mitigates or negates more conventional types of ethical judgements on the figure. The other is represented here by James Redfield's semi-structuralist reading of the *Iliad* (1975). The core of his view lies in the idea that the problematic hero expresses certain fundamental conflicts in his culture (and in human culture generally); and that the special kind of response we give to the problematic hero reflects this fact. The choice of these two types of position is related to my larger project. In ways to be explained, the positions of Plato and Aristotle, while divergent, both express an objective-participant conception of the person. The positions of Butcher and Bradley constitute variant expressions of the subjective-individualist conception of the person; these expressions are related to, but not identical with, the subjective and individualist conceptions of the person discussed in the previous chapter. Redfield's position, by contrast, can be taken as representing a more objective-participant approach, though not of the type with which I am chiefly concerned in this book. I define the line of approach adopted here by reference to these contrasting positions, and to the modes of interpretative reading of texts associated with them.

Before considering these different positions, one further preliminary point needs to be made. I have presented this topic not as being that of the problematic (epic and tragic) figure but that of the problematic *hero*. The term 'hero' is radically ambiguous in contemporary usage, designating both a figure who has a special status in her society (or someone who is a member of a special type of society, namely a 'heroic' one), and a figure who has a special status within a work of art, the 'hero' of the story.⁹ In the *Iliad*, and Greek tragedy—unlike Greek comedy and modern literature in general—the central,

⁹ The use of *heros* (and cognate terms) in the first sense emerges gradually, between the Archaic and Classical periods of Greece, as a way of designating the special figures of an earlier, idealized era; see Havelock (1978), 101–4. The second sense of 'hero' is wholly modern, though it does not, of course, follow from this that there are not 'heroes' (in this second sense) in Greek literature.

problematic figures are invariably 'heroes' in both senses. In all the critical or theoretical positions considered here, the problematic character of these figures arises *both* from the relationship between these figures and the society represented in the poems *and* from the special place that these figures are given in the audience's sympathetic engagement.¹⁰ It also arises from the interplay between these two features. Indeed, the question of the relationship between the ethical status of the problematic hero and the emotional responses that she arouses in the audience stands at the centre of the issue with which I am concerned.

2.2 PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

The difference between the Platonic and Aristotelian positions on this issue comes out clearly in these famous passages:

The best of us, when we listen to Homer or one of the tragic poets representing one of the heroes [τινὰ τῶν ἡρώων] in distress and stretching out a long speech of lamentation or chanting and beating his breast—you know that we take pleasure in this, and, abandoning ourselves, we follow in sympathy [or 'fellow suffering', συμπάσχοντες], and take it seriously, and praise as a good poet one who puts us most effectively in this state. . . .

Do you think our praise is rightly given when, seeing someone react in a way which, in our own case, we would regard as beneath us, and be ashamed of, we do not find this disgusting [βδελύττεσθαι] but enjoy it and praise it. (Plato, *Republic* [R.] 605c10–d5, e4–6)

So it is clear that one should not show virtuous men passing from good to bad fortune, since this does not arouse fear or pity, but only a sense of outrage [μιαρόν] . . . Nor should one show a quite wicked man passing from good to bad fortune; it is true that such an arrangement would satisfy our human feeling [τὸ . . . φιλόανθρωπον], but it would not arouse pity or fear . . . So we have left the man between these. He is one who is not pre-eminent in moral virtue [ἀρετῇ . . . καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ], who passes to bad fortune not through vice or wickedness but because of some kind of fault [or 'error', δι' ἀμαρτίαν τινὰ], and who is of high repute and great good fortune, such as Oedipus and Thyestes and the splendid men of such families.¹¹

¹⁰ See further Jauss (1973), on modes of response to 'heroes', in both senses, in the history of Western literature; and, on Jauss's discussion, see Holub (1984), 78–81, and Frow (1986), 233–4.

¹¹ Arist. *Poetics* (Po.) 13, 1452^b34–1453^a12, tr. Hubbard (1972), with 'some piece of ignorance' revised to 'some kind of fault', and 'like' revised to 'such as'.

These quotations bring out the central core of the difference between the Platonic and Aristotelian positions on this issue. Both discussions accept that we respond with a special type of sympathetic involvement to the presentation of certain key figures in tragedy (and epic).¹² They also accept, more or less explicitly, that this kind of involvement requires explanation, since the actions performed by these figures are of exceptional violence and of a kind that would, in ordinary life, arouse ethical condemnation by those affected and by observers.¹³ The explanations offered, however, are fundamentally different in kind. For Plato, the explanation is that the poetic experience is taken to legitimate vicarious involvement with certain types of unreasonable responses, such as intense grief, of which we would, or should, normally disapprove, if they occurred in real life. These responses are ones towards which we are, at some level, psychologically disposed by nature, despite their unreasonable character; and so we enjoy the vicarious involvement with the figures presented as reacting in this way.¹⁴ It is fundamental to Aristotle's view, by contrast, that we apply similar types of ethical standards to figures in poetry and in real life; and that our emotional responses to them (those of pity and fear, for instance) are graduated precisely in accordance with our ethical judgements on them. The specifications for the best kind of tragedy, cited earlier, define precisely the kind of ethical response that will generate the appropriate emotional response to the figures concerned. What Aristotle seems especially to have in mind are cases in which the crucial act of violence, on which the tragedy centres, is out of line with the figure's generally good, or good-ish, character. He also has in mind cases in which the violent act occurs in a way that does not detract from that goodness of character; this explains his interest in cases where the

¹² Plato explicitly couples Homeric epic and tragedy together in this respect, *R.* 605c10–d5. The relevance of Aristotle's analysis of the best type of tragedy to, at least *Il.*, can perhaps be inferred from his general linking of tragedy with epic. See *Po.* 1462^a14–^b16, taken with Halliwell (1986), 262–5; also *Po.* 1459^b13–15, taken with Gill (1984), 149–51.

¹³ See *Arist. Po.* 1453^b14–22 on the characteristic form of the tragic *pathos* (act of violence), i.e. murder between members of the same family. On the acts of violence (falsely) attributed in Greek poetry to gods and semi-divine heroes, see *R.* 378a–d, 391b–e. *R.* 605d–606d stresses, instead, self-surrender to unreasonable emotions and desires; but the acts condemned in *R.* 386b–391e (including the acts of violence of 391b–e) are clearly also taken to derive from unreasonable emotions and desires.

¹⁴ *R.* 605d–606d. On the problem of explaining why 'even the best of us' react in this way, see n. 20 below. On my use of the term 'unreasonable'; see *Introd.*, n. 58.

act results from ignorance. In such cases, our ethical respect for the figure concerned is sufficient to generate pity and fear (as we involve ourselves in her situation) but not so great as to activate a sense of moral outrage at her undeserved downfall.¹⁵

The sharpness of differentiation between the view of Plato and Aristotle on this question depends, in part, on the fact that each of the two discussions elides, or de-emphasizes, aspects stressed by the other. For instance, the idea that a generally good person might, exceptionally, act badly, or react unreasonably (an idea crucial to Aristotle's theory) is noted only in passing by Plato.¹⁶ Plato seems rather to take the view that even an isolated response, if it is unreasonable, is sufficient to indicate some defectiveness of character in the figure involved.¹⁷ On the other side, Aristotle refrains from exploring the kind of case which, for Plato, would be indicative of such defectiveness: that is, cases in which the performance of the crucial violent act derives from some kind of surrender to pressures in the situation (or in oneself) rather than from ignorance of relevant facts.¹⁸ Scholars who are trying to correlate Aristotle's analysis in *Poetics* 13 with the range of situations in extant tragedies find in those plays, and in Aristotle's categorization of morally complex situations in the ethical works, a number of cases of that kind.¹⁹ A further omission on Plato's part is a full explanation of how an ethically good person can be induced to

¹⁵ *Arist. Po.* 13, esp. 1452^b30–1453^a12, taken together with Stinton (1975), 239; Moles (1979), 92–4; Halliwell (1986), 216–26; Nussbaum (1992), 276–80. Several recent accounts explain Aristotle's account of the crucial tragic 'mistake' or 'fault' (*hamartia*) by reference to the kind of 'moral luck' that is involved in an act that in some way derives from one's agency but does not fully express deliberated action and character: see e.g. Nussbaum (1986), 378–88; Freeland (1992), 118–19; Sherman (1992), 180–4; and, on 'moral luck', see Ch. 1 n. 214 above.

¹⁶ See *R.* 396c5–d3; the point seems to anticipate Aristotle's *hamartia*-theory of *Po.* 13 (a thought that I owe to A. A. Long), but it is not developed.

¹⁷ Thus, the ability to withstand misfortune and occurrent impulses and emotions is taken as the mark of a person of good character: see *R.* 387d–e, 388e–389a, 390d, 603e–604d.

¹⁸ For the idea that Aristotle focuses on the tragic figure's character (*ethos*), rather than exploring the way in which character can be undermined by occurrent emotion (*pathos*), see Gill (1984), 151–2.

¹⁹ See Stinton (1975), 228–33, referring to *NE* 3. 1, 5. 8, 7. 4; and Glanville (1949), referring to *Eudemian Ethics* (EE), 2. 8. The types of case considered by Stinton include: 'Acts done in ignorance due to temporary obfuscation by some passion', and acts of injustice 'committed without deliberation through a natural human impulse, e.g. anger' (p. 232). See also refs. in n. 15 above, and, for a further typology of relevant forms of tragedy, Nussbaum (1992), 283–5.

extend sympathetic identification to someone whose actions and reactions mark him as defective.²⁰

The difference between the views of Plato and Aristotle on this point is intelligibly related to the larger difference between the overall character and assumptions of the works in which these passages occur. In the *Republic*, Plato's main concern is to underline the incompatibility of the ethico-emotional responses produced by existing Greek serious poetry (as of other existing social and political institutions) with the programme of education, and the form of communal life, that he presents as ideally just. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle assumes (and, on some interpretations, argues in explicit opposition to Plato) that the existing genres of Greek poetry are valid forms of cultural life, and that the ethico-emotional responses which they invite can constitute a beneficial part of communal life.²¹ However, this difference in their standpoints should not be allowed to obscure the fact that their disagreement is couched in terms of, and presupposes, a shared objective-participant conception of the person. This point differentiates their disagreement from the partly analogous difference between Butcher and Bradley, couched in subjective-individualist terms, discussed shortly (2.3 below). I outline here some of the relevant features of their thinking; at later points, I examine some of the psycho-ethical theories involved in greater depth.²²

Plato and Aristotle both analyse Greek poetic psychology in the light of an objective (non-subject-centred) psychological model. Like other Greek thinkers, notably the Stoics, they presuppose, or sometimes argue for, the compatibility of their own psychological models with those found in earlier Greek poetry.²³ In Plato's case, the

²⁰ A partial answer is indicated, though obliquely. The cultural prestige of the figures of epic and tragedy makes us treat them as 'good' people, and thus to license a kind of emotional involvement to which 'even the best of us' are drawn. See *R.* 605c10–d5, 606a–b, esp. 606b2, and on the 'distinguished' status of heroes of epic and tragedy, *R.* 386a–392a, esp. 387d1–2, e9, 388e9, 391c–d. For a suggestion why we should be so drawn, see Ferrari (1989), 140–1.

²¹ On the two-stage programme of ethical education in *R.*, see 4.4–5 below, and, on the importance of placing Plato's accounts of poetry in the context of this, see Gill (1993b), 42–51; Ferrari (1989), 108–41. Aristotle's theory about tragic *katharsis* is often taken to be an explicit response to Plato's claims in *R.* 605d–e; see e.g. Hubbard (1972), 87–9; Else (1972); Halliwell (1986), 184–5. For challenges to this view, see Nehamas (1992), 303–9; Lear (1992b), 320–1, 332–5. See also n. 38 below.

²² See Chs. 4–5 below, esp. 4.2, 4.4, 4.6–7; 5.5.

²³ For Stoic practice in this respect, see e.g. Galen, *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* (PHP), 3. 2. 10–20, De Lacy, pp. 178–83, and 3.6 below, text to nn. 194–218. The

relevant model is the tripartite (or bipartite) psyche.²⁴ His principal point, as regards poetry, is that Greek poetry fails to present the normative psycho-ethical state, in which the several psychological functions (beliefs and reasoning, aspiration, desire) are 'harmonized' by education so as to become fully 'reason-ruled'. In Books 2–3, the main thought is that Greek poetic figures fail to correspond to the kind of psycho-ethical patterns which can develop the dispositional basis for this reason-ruled harmony.²⁵ In Book 10, in the context of the passage cited earlier, the point is that, even for 'the best of us' (*R.* 605c10), sympathetic engagement with, for instance, the grief of Achilles²⁶ can undermine a properly developed, and thus 'harmonized', psycho-ethical structure. As I stress later, in both parts of the argument, contrary to what is sometimes supposed, Plato seems to presuppose a psychological model in which emotions and desires are crucially informed by beliefs.²⁷

Aristotle, similarly, presupposes the appropriateness of analysing tragic (and, by inference, epic)²⁸ psychology in terms of the framework deployed in his ethical and rhetorical works. Broadly speaking, he analyses poetic figures in terms of the interrelated ideas of character (*ethos*) and thought (*dianoia*) that are central to his conceptual framework in those other contexts. He assumes that, in

practice of ancient philosophers in this respect, while showing a lack of historical awareness, is justified partly by substantive points of resemblance between Greek poetic and philosophical psychological models; see 3.1 below.

²⁴ In *R.* 441b, Plato cites *Hom. Od.* 20. 17–21 (on which, see 3.2 below) as prefiguring the psychic interplay envisaged in his tripartite model (on which see 4.2 below). See also *R.* 390d and *Phaedo* 94d–e (the latter passage cited in connection with a bipartite model). A bipartite model seems also presumed in *R.* 604d–605c, 606a–b; see further Annas (1981), 338–40.

²⁵ See esp. *R.* 395c–d, 396c–d, 399b–c, 400d–402c; see further Gill (1985), 8–11, Ferrari (1989), 110–18, also below 4.2, 4.4; 4.6, text to nn. 189–225; 4.7, text to nn. 296–300.

²⁶ *R.* 605c–e, taken with 603e–604e, evokes the earlier criticism of Achilles' massive expressions of grief for Patroclus in *Il.* 18 and 24 (388a–c, 391b). When taken with the criticism of Achilles' other controversial acts (his disobedience to the river-god, his slaughter of living captives, his maltreatment of Hector's body, his rejection and subsequent acceptance of Agamemnon's gifts, and his acceptance of Priam's ransom) noted in 390e–391c, it is clear that Homer's Achilles has a special importance for Plato as a (psycho-ethically) problematic hero.

²⁷ See 4.2 and 4.6, text to nn. 189–225 below. This point of contact between the Platonic and Aristotelian psychological frameworks, and its relevance for understanding the precise nature of the disagreement between them on the emotional effect of tragedy, is also noted by Nehamas (1992), 297.

²⁸ See *Po.* 1448^a1–5, 11–12, 25–9, 1448^b24–7, and refs. in n. 12 above.

Greek poetic psychology, as in his own framework, ethical character (being virtuous or defective) is expressed in choice (*prohairesis*), displayed, in the poetic context, in speeches that reveal the quality of the disposition and reasoning underlying the choice.²⁹ As regards emotions, he focuses on the emotional effects produced in the audience, rather than those generated (sometimes destructively) in the poetic figure.³⁰ He assumes, as he does in the *Rhetoric*, that the production of emotions (*pathe*), such as anger, pity, and fear, is intelligibly related to the kind of ethical judgements being made of the people and situations which are the object of the emotions. He also assumes (like Plato, in my interpretation) that emotions are to be understood as informed by relevant beliefs.³¹

The psychological model deployed by Plato and Aristotle, centred on the idea of character, or psycho-ethical structure, whether conceived in terms of the interplay between parts of the psyche, or between functions, is in pointed contrast to that deployed by Butcher and Bradley, in which self-consciousness and will play analogously important roles. But, to bring out the full force of the contrast in outlooks, we need to consider the ways in which Plato and Aristotle combine an ethically 'participant' framework with a psychologically 'objective' one, and one which is conceived in 'objectivist' form. The contrast with the subjective-individualism underlying the modern critics' use of the ideas of self-consciousness and will (more precisely, of the self-conscious realization of one's will) is thus sharpened.

Plato and Aristotle share, in spite of their other differences, a 'participant' view of poetic characterization in two principal ways. Firstly, they both think that it is appropriate to apply to poetic figures in fictional contexts the ethical vocabulary and judgements standardly applied to real people participating in real interpersonal

²⁹ See *Po.* 6, esp. 1450^b5–12, 15, esp. 1454^a17–19; see further Schütrumpf (1970), esp. 52–63; and Blundell (1992), who argues that Aristotle has a coherent (and credible) view of the relationship between *ethos* and *dianoia* in Greek tragedy. On the ethical psychology involved, see 1.3 above, text to nn. 137–42; 4.2 below, text to nn. 15–31.

³⁰ See n. 18 above.

³¹ See *Rhetoric* (*Rh.*) 2, 2, 5, 8. On the belief-based psychology implied here, see 3.3 n. 78 below. On the application of this psycho-ethical framework to the question of the best type of tragedy in *Po.* 13, see e.g. Nussbaum (1992), 273–80. On links between the Platonic and Aristotelian psychological model in this respect, see n. 27 above.

and communal relationships.³² Secondly, both Greek thinkers conceive the experience of responding to epic and tragedy as part of a communal process or institution, and one whose validity depends on the shared benefit given to the participants in this communal activity.³³ Thirdly, their standpoint is, in each case, objectivist, in the sense that they assume that there are objective standards applying to the ethico-emotional effects produced by poetry. In Plato's case, the negative judgement on the effect of epic and tragedy is made in the context of an argument which gives a central place to the idea that there are objective standards governing what counts as a normatively 'just' psycho-ethical condition. In Aristotle, the objectivism in defining the ethical status of the central tragic figure, and the correlated ethico-emotional reactions, is implicit, but no less evident.³⁴

I explain my own position more fully after considering the two types of modern critical approach; but I make some preliminary comments on the issue raised by Plato and Aristotle. The line of interpretation that I adopt is closer to Aristotle than to Plato, in that I take it that the special sympathetic involvement that we have with the problematic hero is bound up with our ethical response to her and does not run counter to this. On the other hand, the way in which I pursue this line is not particularly close to the way that Aristotle does. Central to my approach is the thought that our sympathetic involvement with the hero is a reflection of our engagement with the reasons and reasoning, and with the mixture of psychological pressures and agency, that motivate the violent or (seemingly) unreasonable act on which the tragedy turns. Aristotle, as we have seen, tends rather to avoid the exploration of the motivation of the violent act. The core of his thought is rather that our respect for the character of the main figure (and the fact that the

³² To say this is not to overlook the way in which the Platonic and Aristotelian accounts of the audience's response presupposes the fact that they are responding to (what we call) 'fiction'; see, on Plato, Gill (1993b), 46–7, 50–1; and, on Aristotle, Lear (1992b), 320–1, 331–4.

³³ This is obvious in the case of *Pl. R.* Whatever the precise nature of Aristotle's theory of *katharsis* (on which, see refs. in nn. 21 above and 38 below), it is directed at showing the ethico-emotional benefit of tragedy to the members of the community who share this experience; see further Rorty (1992a), 12–15, 16–18.

³⁴ On the relevance of this point to understanding the ethical psychology of *R.*, see 4.5–6, esp. 4.5, text to nn. 154–73 below. On Aristotle's ethical objectivism, or cognitivism, in general, see e.g. Price (1989), 126–30; the analysis of *Po.* 13 assumes that it is possible to offer an objectively valid account of the ethico-emotional reactions produced by a determinate kind of poetic plot and character.

violent act does *not* reflect actual wickedness) is sufficient to mitigate the ethical condemnation that would otherwise accompany such actions.³⁵ Of course, this is partly a matter of the type of case that each of us has primarily in view. Aristotle's star examples are those, such as *Oedipus the King*, in which the main figure's ignorance is crucial: my cases are those in which the problematic act is one which the figure chooses to perform.³⁶ But also involved is a difference of view about the way, and the extent, to which the audience can become ethically engaged in the motivation of ethically problematic acts.³⁷

This point is related to a second difference of view, which may help to clarify the first. In so far as Aristotle sees epic and tragedy as presenting an ethical challenge to its audience (and this is not a way of understanding poetry that is explicit in the treatise), it seems to be in the form of matching our ethical responses to the extreme cases represented.³⁸ He does not explore the idea that the ethical *thinking* embodied in the problematic hero's motivational reasoning might represent an ethical challenge to the audience, as well as to the hero's fellow-figures. But the idea that the problematic hero is motivated by a type of second-order reasoning (examining the principles that should underlie deliberative choice) forms a key part of my interpretation. The challenge posed by the problematic hero is

³⁵ See text to n. 15 above. In so far as he thinks that we appraise character by reference to choice-disclosing speeches (n. 29 above), he presupposes some degree of involvement in the figure's motivational thinking; but he does not refer to this point in his ethico-emotional analysis of the production of pity and fear in *Po.* 13.

³⁶ Euripides' *Medea* is, thus, for Aristotle an instance of a relatively unsatisfactory type of tragedy, contrasted unfavourably with the type exemplified by *Oedipus*: see *Po.* 14, esp. 1453^b27-9 and 1454^a37-1454^b31; see also S. A. White (1992), esp. 233. It follows that my kind of interpretation would need to be extended to take in the kind of cases on which Aristotle focuses.

³⁷ In so far as I posit a special kind of engagement with the motivation and psychological state underlying the problematic act of the problematic hero, my position is, after all, close to Plato. But it is not engagement of a kind in which ethical judgement is suspended (as it is for Plato); at most, *conventional* ethical judgement is suspended, as we follow the problematic hero's unconventional ethical motivation.

³⁸ In some accounts of *katharsis*, this process is conceived as 'cognitive' or 'educative' (i.e. tragedy teaches us how to learn better how to 'hit the mean' in our ethico-emotional reactions to extreme and problematic situations); see e.g. Hubbard (1972), 88; Halliwell (1986), 200-1; Nussbaum (1986), 390-1. For the contrary view that tragedy provides emotional realization of experiences that we already grasp conceptually, see Lear (1992b), 330-5. But, on neither view, are our ethical preconceptions challenged at a fundamental level, as Freeland notes, (1992), 128. See further, for a review of the issue of the nature of *katharsis* in *Arist. Po.*, and for a new account of the idea that *katharsis* is an 'allopathic' process, Belfiore (1992), chs. 8-10.

bound up with the challenge of the second-order reasoning with which the audience becomes, in this way, engaged. Relatedly, in my view, the audience's engagement with this reasoning is part of our engagement with a nexus of ideas (a type of 'dialectic') embodied in the work as a whole; and this too is not a thought pursued by Aristotle.³⁹ Thus, although on the crucial point that divides him from Plato, I take an Aristotelian position, I do not frame my interpretation in the way that Aristotle does.

2.3 LATE ROMANTIC AND STRUCTURALIST APPROACHES

Before defining further the kind of interpretation to be adopted here, I consider two types of modern approach in the light of the issue posed by Plato and Aristotle. One is that of the late Victorian and Edwardian scholars, S. H. Butcher and A. C. Bradley, writing on literary theory; the other is that of an influential modern study of the *Iliad*, Redfield (1975, 2nd edn., 1994). The earlier scholars state their positions on this issue in a markedly subjective-individualist form; the influence of this form of thinking can still be seen in contemporary Homeric scholarship. Redfield's broadly structuralist study exemplifies what could be called an 'objective-participant' approach, though not quite of the type followed in this book.⁴⁰

Of the critics to be discussed, two (Butcher and Redfield) see themselves as developing the Aristotelian approach; and both of these explore the idea that tragedy or the *Iliad* poses a type of ethical challenge to its audience, though they understand this idea in very different ways.

We would wish that Aristotle had gone further and said explicitly that in power, even more than in virtue, the tragic hero must be raised above the ordinary level; that he must possess a deeper vein of feeling, or heightened

³⁹ Aristotle, though admitting a role for 'thought' *within* the dialogue of the tragedy (*Po.* 1449^b38-1450^a3, 6-7, see further Blundell (1992)), and while seeing a poem as, in some sense, a medium for learning (*Po.* 4) and as more 'philosophical' than history (*Po.* 9), does not pursue quite this line of thought. For my approach, see 2.4 below.

⁴⁰ Redfield's approach, like that of other structuralist studies, can be described as 'objective-participant' in that (1) the interpretative focus is on non-subjective categories (e.g. 'human', 'beast', 'god') rather than on ideas such as individual self-realization, and (2) the art-work is taken to serve a social function and thus to contribute to shared ('participant') human life. See further text to nn. 54-62 below, esp. nn. 54-5; also 2.4 below, n. 76 and text to nn. 92-4. Page refs. are to 1975 edn.

powers of intellect or will; that the morally trivial, rather than the morally bad, is fatal to tragic effect. (Butcher (1932), 317)

Butcher, discussing Aristotle's analysis in *Poetics* 13, here marks a crucial point of difference between himself and Aristotle. Indeed, although Butcher sees himself only as modifying Aristotle,⁴¹ it is modification which brings him much closer, in some ways, to Plato's position.

[Aristotle's] limitation of view arises from applying a purely ethical instead of an aesthetic standard to dramatic character . . . Wickedness on a grand scale, resolute and intellectual, may raise the criminal above the commonplace and invest him with a sort of dignity. There is something terrible and sublime in mere will-power working its evil way, dominating its surroundings with a superhuman energy. The wreck of such power excites in us a certain tragic sympathy; not indeed the genuine pity which is inspired by unmerited suffering; but a sense of loss and regret over the waste or misuse of gifts so splendid. (ibid. 313-14)

The contrast between aesthetic and ethical standards and the idea that poetic representation can induce sympathetic involvement with figures which we should find ethically repugnant in real life recall Plato. However, there are certain features in Butcher's position which differentiate it from Plato's. One is the idea that the problematic hero, while not 'good' in a moral sense, has qualities which are 'good' in some sense.⁴² Another is the idea that a crucial part of our aesthetic response to the evil tragic hero consists of a response to *his own* (self-aware) appreciation of the realization of his own evil will. Thus, Butcher describes Shakespeare's Richard III as:

... [the] embodiment of an entirely depraved will . . . fashioning all things with relentless adaptation to its own ends, yet standing sufficiently aloof from life to jest over it with savage humour . . . His masterpieces of crime are forged by intellect and carried out with an artistic finish and completeness . . . [As a result, for the audience the] moral sense is kept half in abeyance up

⁴¹ See also Butcher (1932), 230-5, where Butcher allows himself to attribute to Aristotle a quasi-aesthetic sense of 'goodness' in tragic character (against which see e.g. Schütrumpf (1970), 52-63), while not going so far as to claim that Aristotle 'would . . . allow that there may be a dignity . . . which saves even vice from being contemptible' (p. 233).

⁴² See Butcher (1932), 313; the wickedness concerned is 'resolute and intellectual'. See also pp. 314-15: 'Richard, equally devoid of moral scruple . . . is yet a prince with royal purposes and an insight into affairs.' For Bradley's version of this idea, see text to nn. 51-3 below.

to the close of such a drama. The badness of the man is almost lost in the sense of power. (314-15)

Butcher touches here on a theme which we find articulated in other discussions of tragedy in this period. The audience's involvement with tragedy is understood as a response to the dramatic expression of the hero's consciousness or self-consciousness.⁴³ In some cases, of the kind that Butcher dwells on, the audience's response to the hero's self-conscious realization of his own will has the effect of negating, in part at least, the ethical condemnation which such actions would otherwise arouse. Bradley, in a relevant essay, presents Hegel's explanation of what is involved in such cases. In Hegel's view, the high degree of self-consciousness which is characteristic of the modern era expresses itself, among other ways, in the self-conscious realization of individual personality. Hence, as Bradley puts it, '... the interest in personality explains the freedom with which characters more or less definitely evil are introduced in modern tragedy'.⁴⁴ The point is that, since modern audiences prize the self-conscious realization of personality (and give it, in effect, ethical value), this compensates, in their minds, for the evil which the problematic hero performs. The audience's subjective involvement with the hero's self-conscious realization of his individual will mitigates the condemnation which derives from our sharing the ethical standpoint of those affected adversely by the hero's evil actions. Thus, although these theories are expressed in terms of aesthetic responses to tragedy, they presuppose what is, in effect, an ethical position.

This ethical position constitutes a clear example of the strand of thinking about the person that I am calling 'subjective-individualist'. Indeed, the strand is *subjectivist-individualist*: it does not only focus on the idea of the 'self' (conceived as individual subject) but gives a special status to individual subjectivity (Introd., n. 21). This strand is not identical with the Cartesian position (in the philosophy of mind) or the Kantian position (in ethics), the influence of which on Snell and Adkins is examined in the preceding chapter (1.1 above). But, according to some recent accounts, this strand can be understood as

⁴³ See e.g. Henry James's comment: 'Their being finely aware—as Hamlet and Lear, say, are finely aware—*makes* absolutely the intensity of their adventure, gives the maximum of sense to what befalls them' (James (1908), p. viii, in the Preface to *The Princess Casamassima*, first pub. 1886).

⁴⁴ Bradley (1955a), 78, also 93-4; and Silk and Stern (1981), 322-3.

an intelligible outcome of the interplay between these two earlier positions. The stress on self-consciousness in the post-Cartesian conception of the person is combined with the stress on self-legislation (autonomy) in the post-Kantian conception of person. The resulting idea is that the self-conscious realization of one's 'authentic' (that is, autonomously conceived) personality is an inherent good.⁴⁵

It is worth noting here that the modern thinker who pushes to an extreme the idea that individual 'self-realization' or 'self-creation' constitutes a value superior to conventional morality, namely Nietzsche, also articulates the ethical position that is implied in Butcher's type of response to the tragic hero. As Alexander Nehamas points out, Nietzsche, in advocating his policy of individual self-realization, urges us to appraise ourselves by the same standards that we use to judge figures in literature. What matters about Shakespeare's Richard III or Dostoyevsky's Fyodor Karamazov (in Nietzsche's view) is not whether he is good or bad but whether he is a distinctive or interesting *individual*; and we should take the same view of ourselves in our own 'self-creation'.⁴⁶ This fusion of aesthetic and ethical categories, together with the radically subjectivist-individualist stance that Nietzsche adopts, come out clearly in this passage:

One thing is needful. —To 'give style' to one's character—a great and rare art! It is practised by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye . . . Here the ugly that could not be removed is concealed; there it has been reinterpreted and made sublime . . . In the end, when the work is finished, it becomes evident how the constraint of a single taste governed and formed everything large and small. Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might imagine, if only it was a single taste!⁴⁷

⁴⁵ See Intro., text to nn. 26–7, and 2.5 below, text to nn. 100–9. This is not the *only* way of interpreting the nature and influence of the Cartesian model of mind and the Kantian model of moral rationality (taken separately or together). Indeed, Kant is sometimes seen as the originator of a strongly *impersonal*, universalistic mode of moral theorizing which gives inadequate attention to the ethical significance of individual particularity and character; see e.g. Williams (1981a), ch. 1, esp. 1–5, 14–15. In spite of this, the claim can be made that Kant, in giving a foundational role to the individual moral agent, prepared the way for more radically individualistic conceptions of the nature of this role.

⁴⁶ See Nehamas (1985), 190–4; also 171–2, 184, 217–18.

⁴⁷ Nietzsche (1974), 290. This passage is also cited as illustrative of the radically subjectivist-individualist approach to personality in Gill (1993a), 352, (1994), 4634.

The key point here is that the difference between 'strengths and weaknesses', 'good and bad', matters less than whether the process of self-creation is determined by a 'single taste', that is, the individual's own subjective view of what will give a distinctive unity to his personality. In giving this advice, Nietzsche articulates (in a characteristically provocative mode) the valuation of the self-conscious realization of individuality that is also implied in the literary critical comments of his contemporaries, such as Butcher.⁴⁸

Bradley also offers an explanation in ethical terms for the sympathetic response to evil, but powerful (and subjectively realized) individuals which he, like Butcher, sees as a characteristic response of modern audiences to modern tragedy.⁴⁹ His explanation is less provocative than that suggested by Nietzsche; in fact, it is one that brings Bradley rather closer than Butcher to Aristotle's position on this issue. Bradley's theory of tragedy is presented as a modification of Hegel's. Hegel's theory centres on the idea that tragedy, in its most powerful form, dramatizes a necessary conflict between two rights or moralities (more precisely, between figures who embody these rights.) The conflict is 'necessary' because it represents the moment of transition between two phases of human consciousness (*Geist*), and the resulting conflict between the moralities associated with these phases. Hegel's norm for such tragedies is Greek (the *Antigone* or *Oresteia*); modern forms of tragedy, such as Shakespeare's, are seen as reflecting the interest in subjectively realized 'personalities' which is characteristic of our phase of culture, and hence as failing to symbolize the more fundamental types of conflict (between right and right) presented in Greek tragedy.⁵⁰

Bradley aims to show that the modern type of tragedy, that centred on 'personalities', is explicable in terms of Hegel's general theory, even when it involves figures such as Macbeth, who are 'more or less definitely evil' (p. 78). His argument is that there is

⁴⁸ *The Gay Science* was first published in 1882, and *Ecce Homo*, in which the idea of 'self-creation' also figures prominently, was written in 1888 and published posthumously in 1908. Butcher's and Bradley's books were first published in 1895 and 1909, respectively (see also James's contemporary comment, n. 43 above). For the tracing of some comparable connections between 'aestheticism' and the ethic of self-realization in this period see Trilling (1972), chs. 4–5, esp. 118–22; C. Taylor (1989), 440–55.

⁴⁹ Cf. Bradley (1955a), 77–9 (including the comment cited above, text to n. 44), with Butcher (1932), 313–16.

⁵⁰ See Silk and Stern (1981), 312–26, esp. 318 and 324–5; Bradley (1955a), 72–9 and 93–4.

enough 'good' in Macbeth to make his conflict with others (Duncan, Banquo, and so on), and the conflicts within himself, ones that involve 'spiritual value' on both sides. The qualities that Bradley has in mind are not all 'good' in a conventionally moral sense: they include 'such an imagination as few but poets possess . . . a conscience so vivid . . . a determination so tremendous and a courage so appalling . . .'.⁵¹ It is the countervailing presence of these qualities that, in Bradley's view, explains the special sympathetic response that we give to a figure who is 'more or less definitely evil':

Do not [these qualities] make you, for all your horror, admire Macbeth, sympathise with his agony, pity him, and see in him the waste of forces on which you place a spiritual value. It is simply on this account that he is for you, not the abstraction called a criminal who merely 'gets what he deserves' . . . but a tragic hero, and that his war with other forces of indubitable spiritual worth is a tragic war. (88)

Although Bradley describes the process as one that includes involvement in the subjective perspective of Macbeth (pp. 87–8), he explicitly distinguishes his position from the one outlined earlier in connection with Butcher and Nietzsche, in which the response depends essentially on sympathetic involvement in the hero's realization of his own individuality.

Our interest in Macbeth may be called interest in a personality: but it is not an interest in some bare form of self-consciousness . . . but in a personality full of matter. This matter . . . must in a sense be universal—human nature in a particular form—or it would not excite the horror, sympathy, and admiration it does excite. Nor again would it excite these feelings if it were not composed largely of qualities on which we set a high value. (88 n. 1)

Bradley does not provide any larger framework in which to understand this attempt to define our response to the evil tragic hero in terms other than those of involvement with the hero's self-consciousness.⁵² But his remarks mark an attempt (in a very different

⁵¹ Bradley (1955a), 87: it is no accident that these qualities all have a strongly subjective, self-aware, dimension, or that Bradley's characterization of Macbeth seems virtually to assimilate Macbeth's vision to that of the poet, or of the work as a whole (on this point see Gould (1978), 47–8, and n. 90 below).

⁵² In a general way, Bradley presupposes the Hegelian framework, with its conception of human civilization as the development of self-consciousness (see n. 50 above and 1.1 above, text to nn. 21–31). But his comments on p. 88 n. 1, cited above, are not linked explicitly with Hegel's theory, which Bradley is, at this point, modifying and extending.

intellectual idiom) to outline a position closer to Aristotle's, in which our sympathetic response to the tragic hero is based on ethical considerations; and his attempt is one which involves the idea that we have a shared 'human nature' and are not simply separate individuals and centres of subjectivity.⁵³

The second type of critical approach considered here does offer an intellectual framework in which our sympathetic response to the problematic hero is understood as implying a form of engagement with larger social and human questions. This is the structuralist approach (of a broadly Lévi-Straussian type), of which I take Redfield's study of the *Iliad* (1975) as being, at least partly, representative.⁵⁴ In so far as it has a social dimension, this approach is closer to Hegel's than is Bradley's modified version of Hegel's theory; but there are also significant differences between the Hegelian and the structuralist positions. One is that structuralism sets out to demarcate conflicts which are present in human society at any given time or, in some accounts, at *any* time. They are not seen as deriving from the transition from one phase of historico-cultural consciousness to another. Another is that, while Hegel takes as evidence for his view the kinds of conflict and disagreement that are explicitly part of the dialogue of the work (in the debates of the *Antigone* and *Oresteia*, for instance), structuralists claim that a special kind of analysis is required to decode the types of conflicts and resolution which are, in various ways, built into the deep structure of the work in question. The conflicts thus disclosed centre on the relationship between certain basic polar opposites, such as nature and culture, human and beast, male and female. The problematic hero is understood, in this mode of analysis, as a 'marginal' case, situated at the boundaries of these opposites, and one who, by expressing the conflict between them, serves to 'mediate' them at the level of deep structure.⁵⁵

⁵³ The idea that tragedy represents a particularized form of the general recalls Arist. *Po.* 4, 1450^a39–1451^b11. But the relevance of the idea of human nature to ethical thinking, while prominent in *NE* 1. 7, for instance, is not explicit in Aristotle's analysis of ethico-emotional responses in *Po.* 13 (on which see 2.3 above, text to nn. 11–15).

⁵⁴ My concern here is with the kind of structuralism that has evolved out of cultural anthropology rather than with the formalist structuralism that has evolved out of the work of Russian formalists such as V. Propp. On the latter see e.g. Scholes (1974), 60 ff.; Culler (1975), 233 ff.; this has been developed in semiotic terms by e.g. Hamon (1977) and Culler (1981), in connection with literary characterization.

⁵⁵ On the method involved see e.g. Segal (1981), ch. 2, and (1986); for fuller discussion of Lévi-Strauss (on myth), see Kirk (1970), ch. 2.

Redfield's study of the *Iliad* is actually semi-structuralist in approach. He starts from a reading of the poem as a tragedy (understood in broadly Aristotelian terms) and then re-interprets the Aristotelian pattern of tragedy in a structuralist way.⁵⁶ This mode of interpretation is applied both to Achilles and Hector; perhaps surprisingly, Hector is seen as the figure in whom the tragic pattern is worked out most fully. Achilles' story is seen as embodying 'error' (*hamartia*) and destruction; but the error is seen as a collective one, to which different parties contribute by intended and unintended actions. Hector's error (centred on his rejection of Polydamas' advice in Book 18) is an individual one, leading directly to his own downfall; and to this extent he expresses the tragic pattern more fully.⁵⁷ In considering both Homeric figures, however, Redfield's interpretation depends, at crucial points, on a structuralist analysis of what underlies these patterns of error. For instance, Achilles is seen as exemplifying the marginal status of the warrior in its most extreme, problematic form; the warrior functions on behalf of his community but he does so by committing anti-communal, violent actions. The fragile relationship between the warrior and his community is maintained by honour:⁵⁸ the warrior is motivated by honour, and in return for honour he risks his life for his community. In Achilles' case, the denial of his honour (by Agamemnon) ruptures the relationship between warrior and community. As a result, he crosses the 'margin' from culture to nature, and becomes an isolated, half-bestial figure fighting for himself (and for what he holds dear) and dislocated from his community.⁵⁹

In comparison with Achilles, Hector remains more fully within culture, and within the framework of a community. But he too expresses the conflicts built into the hero's existence (at least, into that of a hero functioning on behalf of his community). In particular, he expresses the contradiction between realizing the communal objectives of fighting and satisfying his individual desire for honour.

⁵⁶ Redfield (1975), ch. 2, esp. 78–82, 84, 87.

⁵⁷ Redfield (1975), 91–8, and 128–59. This view of Achilles involves a defence against those who see him as presented as ethically culpable: see (against e.g. Bowra), pp. 3–11, esp. 8, 17–19, and see further 2.5 below, text to nn. 95–6.

⁵⁸ For a similar view of the role of honour in Homeric ethics, see Posner (1979), 42, 44.

⁵⁹ Redfield (1975), 103–8, 203–4. For a different structuralist analysis of Achilles' wrath, formulated in terms of the interplay between social reciprocity and religious ritual, and forming part of a developmental account of Greek culture, see Seaford (1994a), 65–73, and ch. 5, esp. 159–80.

In *Iliad* 18, his rejection of Polydamas' advice, his 'error', in Aristotelian terms, marks the preference of the latter goal over the former (or rather, his failure to fulfil both goals at the same time).⁶⁰ Hector's monologue in *Iliad* 22 brings out the consequences of that error. He cannot re-enter the community which has provided the informing context of his heroic action; and, having lost his role as the military leader of his community (through his own error), his final combat with Achilles lacks the significance that it has for Achilles, whose motivation to fight is purely personal and not now communal in any way.⁶¹ Thus, Redfield's analysis, while it is not, for the most part, couched as an explanation for the special kind of sympathetic involvement that we have with the problematic hero in spite of his ethically unconventional actions and attitudes, does in effect (and sometimes explicitly) constitute such an explanation.⁶² The core idea is that problematic heroes such as Achilles and Hector arouse this sympathetic involvement because they serve, within the structure of the poem as a whole, to express, and thus mediate, conflicts and contradictions which, while presented in the idealized heroic context, have a larger relevance for communal and human life in general.

2.4 CRITICAL POSITION ADOPTED HERE

I now situate the approach adopted in this chapter in relation to these two types of modern critical position (which I have treated as addressing, in their different ways, the issue raised by Plato and Aristotle about the relationship between ethical and emotional responses to tragedy). I deal first with the question of my general approach, and then with that of the correlated mode of interpreting texts. It would be surprising, given the larger thesis of this book, if I were to adopt a version of the position discussed in connection with Butcher, in which the special kind of sympathy aroused by the tragic hero is taken to be grounded in a response to the self-realization of individual personality (on the assumption that such self-realization

⁶⁰ See Redfield (1975), ch. 4, esp. the discussion of *Il.* 18. 246–313, on pp. 150–3; also 123, 153–4, and (on Redfield's analysis) Schofield (1986), 18–22.

⁶¹ See Redfield (1975), 155–9; and discussion of *Il.* 22. 99–130 in 1.4 above, text to nn. 180–222.

⁶² This issue comes closest to being articulated in these terms in the passages in Redfield (1975) listed in n. 57 above, also 153–4.

is inherently worthwhile).⁶³ My principal objection to such a view is not that, because it was formulated to identify the distinctive properties of modern (Shakespearean) tragedy,⁶⁴ it is, therefore, irrelevant to the interpretation of the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy. It would be possible, none the less, to construct a Butcher-type (or Nietzschean)⁶⁵ view of the problematic hero in the Greek context: indeed, a view of this general type underlies a significant strand of critical interpretation of the 'heroism' of Homer's Achilles.⁶⁶ My objection is rather that such an interpretation would run counter to the essential character of these works, and to the conception of the person that they embody.

It is worth underlining this point, since some earlier formulations of my views on epic and tragic characterization may have given the impression that I intended to advance a view similar to Butcher's. In two previous discussions, I have suggested that we can understand the special kind of sympathetic response that we give to tragic, and Iliadic, heroes as a combination of a 'character-approach' and a 'personality-approach'; and that, at key (problematic) moments, we shift from a character-approach to a personality-approach. Since some of the ways I have defined the 'personality-approach' involve attitudes and ideas which are relevant to a subjective-individualist conception of the problematic hero (of the kind discussed in connection with Butcher),⁶⁷ it may have seemed that this is the conception of the person that I saw as expressed, essentially, in the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy. However, this has not been my aim previously, and it is, emphatically, not my aim in this book.⁶⁸ In using the dis-

⁶³ See 2.3 above, text to nn. 41-8; I find Bradley's version of this position more congenial, text to nn. 49-53, but insufficiently developed on the crucial point, the larger 'human' significance of an interest in 'personality'.

⁶⁴ See refs. in n. 49 above.

⁶⁵ I have in view the Nietzschean ethic of self-realization, as expressed in *The Gay Science* and *Ecce Homo*, rather than the account of Greek tragedy given in *The Birth of Tragedy*; see n. 46 above and, on the relationship between these two strands of Nietzsche's thought, Silk and Stern (1981), 115 ff.

⁶⁶ See 2.5 below, text to nn. 98-109.

⁶⁷ i.e. an interest in personal individuality or in a distinctively individual ethic, and a 'subjective' standpoint which gives special status to a person's individual (esp. 'first-personal') viewpoint: see Gill (1990b) 4-5, esp. 5 n. 15, and Gill (1986), 253-4.

⁶⁸ Indeed, my discussion of Butcher's position in this context has been designed, in part, to clarify its differences from that to be adopted here. I would also like to discount any impression that these earlier discussions are concerned with an interest in individual personality as somehow detachable from our involvement in the work as a whole, i.e. the whole complex of narrative, character, and imagery. On this point, see Gill (1986), 271-2, (1990b), 7-9, 30-1; also (1990a), 79-85.

tinction in this way,⁶⁹ what I wanted to underline was the special type of complexity involved in our responses to key tragic and Iliadic figures at key moments. In particular, I wanted to bring out the point, which Aristotle's discussion does not register sufficiently, that such cases seem to evade categorization in terms of the framework of ethical judgement that we normally apply to real-life situations (or in terms of the framework which the other figures apply to the problematic hero's case). The personality-approach which we apply to such figures at such moments can be understood as consisting, in part, in a kind of 'openness', in which we suspend the normal framework of ethical judgement and, in this spirit, engage sympathetically with the exceptional motivation or psychological state underlying the problematic act. This kind of ethical and emotional openness can be associated with the challenging or 'interrogatory' impact which, I have also suggested, Greek tragedies, like the *Iliad*, are characteristically designed to have on their audiences.⁷⁰

However, what needs to be explored much more than I have done elsewhere is the nature of the kinds of motivation (the reasons and reasoning, and the types of psychological state) with which we engage sympathetically in these cases; and also the way in which such engagement has an interrogatory effect on us. Crucial to this question is the point made earlier: that the problematic heroes are presented as grounding their problematic actions in 'second-order' reasoning about the basic goals and principles that should govern human action.⁷¹ We (the readers or audience) become engaged in their reasoning, as expressed in key speeches and acts, and are thus better placed to understand the rationale for their problematic actions than their fellow-figures, who are reactively involved with the heroes, and who judge them by ethical standards which are not guided by such second-order reasoning. In so far as we follow their

⁶⁹ In Gill (1983b), 470-8, I used a related version of the distinction to demarcate the characteristic approaches of ancient and modern (i.e. Victorian and contemporary) biographers to their subjects. Although the argument of this book is more complex, the distinction drawn there anticipates the contrast drawn here between 'objective-participant' and 'subjective-individualist' conceptions of the person.

⁷⁰ See Gill (1990b), 6-7, 29-31, (1986), 264-72. Other cultural and conceptual frameworks offer analogues for this type of non-judgemental 'openness', e.g. unconditional forgiveness and love in the Christian framework (see e.g. Vlastos (1981), 32-3), and the non-reactive 'object' relationship (e.g. that of parent to young child and psychoanalyst to patient) outlined by Strawson (1974), 19-20.

⁷¹ See 2.1 above, text to n.1, and, on 'second-order' reasoning, 2.6 below, text to nn. 125-6.

second-order reasoning (and understand the way in which this issues in non-standard actions, which constitute exemplary gestures), we see the force of the challenge, or interrogation, thus administered to the pre-reflective ethical principles presupposed by the other figures. In this way, the work as a whole engages us, through our involvement with the problematic hero, in second-order reasoning about the issues involved. This is the form in which I explore here the specially complex character of our response to problematic heroes and the process which I have described elsewhere as the shift from a 'character-approach' to a 'personality-approach' at key moments in the *Iliad* and tragedy.⁷²

I pursue this line of interpretation in connection with Homer's Achilles and Euripides' Medea (though I take it that a similar line of interpretation could be developed in other cases also).⁷³ As I bring out, some not wholly dissimilar claims have been made already about Homer's Achilles. But I argue that existing interpretations of this type ascribe to Achilles an inappropriate kind of second-order reasoning. They presuppose that Achilles' reasoning centres on the kind of ideal of individual self-realization discussed earlier in connection with Butcher and Nietzsche; that is, they characterize Achilles' 'heroism' in terms of late Romantic conceptions of heroism.⁷⁴ I claim that Achilles' position, especially as expressed in his great speech in *Iliad* 9, is better understood in 'objective-participant' terms, as an expression of reasoning about proper forms of human co-operative activity, and, more generally, about the proper goals of a human life, rather than in terms of individual self-realization, as conceived by the critics that I have in view.⁷⁵ I also argue for what is,

⁷² I interpret this shift here as consisting in a move from judging the hero by the pre-reflective ethical standards presupposed by the other figures to adopting an 'open' state of mind in which we follow the second-order reasoning on which the hero grounds her non-standard actions and exemplary gestures. On 'participant reactive attitudes', see Strawson (1974a), 4–13, summarized in 1.3 above, text to n. 117, and on non-reactive attitudes, n. 70 above.

⁷³ On this last point, see 2.8 below, text to nn. 204–8.

⁷⁴ See 2.5 below, text to nn. 98–109, and text to nn. 41–8 above.

⁷⁵ My interpretation implies a 'participant' conception of the person in that it understands the problematic hero's response as deriving from her 'participant' role (engaged in interpersonal and communal relationships) and as expressing reflective reasoning about the proper forms of relationship (of the type in which she is engaged). It implies (1) an 'objective' conception of the person in that it analyses the human psychology involved in non-subjective terms, e.g. those of types of motivational reasons; and (2) an 'objectivist' conception in that it sees the hero's reflective reasoning as centred on the goals of a proper human life (regarded as amenable to objective

on the face of it, a more difficult thesis to maintain: namely, that Medea's decision to punish Jason through infanticide is an exemplary gesture which implies second-order reasoning about the ethical claims of co-operative relationships (*philia*) and about the weight that such relationships should be given in the shaping of a human life. It is part of my view that the content of the problematic heroes' reasoning makes a qualitative difference to the nature of our sympathetic engagement with them. We respond to them as the vehicles of reflective reasoning about certain fundamental issues of human life, including those concerning the proper forms of co-operative relationship.⁷⁶ This is, clearly, very different from the kind of response presupposed by Butcher (and, in effect, by some Homeric scholars): namely that of identification with the problematic hero as the vehicle for the ethical quest for individual self-realization.⁷⁷

As noted earlier, a further distinctive feature of the characterization of the problematic hero inheres in the presentation of his psychological state. Hector's monologue in *Iliad* 22 brings out, to some extent, the way in which the hero may be presented (and may see himself) as trapped by his situation or by some force within himself, or by the combination of both of these. This fact, of which the audience may be given a kind of understanding not shared by the other figures, contributes to the special sympathy that we have for the hero.⁷⁸ This is an aspect of our response of which all the kinds of interpretation discussed so far can be seen as offering some form of explanation.⁷⁹ This is also a feature of the presentation of the

determination) rather than on individual self-realization. On the categories, see *Introd.*, n. 21; and, on the last point, see 4.7 below, text to nn. 273–8.

⁷⁶ In arguing that the nature of our response to the problematic hero is bound up with her role in expressing fundamental conflicts in communal life and in human life generally, my position comes close to the structuralist one, as exemplified in Redfield (1975); but, for differences in the interpretative approach involved, see text to nn. 92–4 below.

⁷⁷ See text to nn. 83–91 below, on the contrast between the mode of interpretative reading adopted here and that associated with the late Romantic conception of the person.

⁷⁸ See further Gill (1986), 263–72, and (1990b), 22–9; also 2.1 above, text to n. 83. On Hector, see 1.4 above, text to nn. 208–22 below.

⁷⁹ For Plato, it is explained as an emotionally self-indulgent response to the portrayal of self-surrender, *R.* 605c10–606b8. For Aristotle, it is explained as the combination of pity and fear aroused by the good man whose downfall results from his non-vicious 'fault' (see 2.2 above, text to nn. 11–15). For Butcher (1932), 313–16, it is

problematic hero which can be examined usefully by reference to Achilles and Medea. Medea's famous monologue (*Med.* 1021–80) is a striking expression of a certain kind of psychological conflict: that in which 'I' am in conflict with (and finally subject to) some aspect of myself which 'I' feel as 'other'.⁸⁰ Some of Achilles' speeches (notably that in *Il.* 9. 645–8) have been taken to prefigure this kind of psychological conflict and self-division. In my treatment of this topic in the next chapter, I stress the importance of taking into account the interpersonal context of these expressions of self-division, as well as the ethical stances taken up by the heroes and the second-order reasoning underlying those stances. I argue that Achilles' comment in *Iliad* 9. 645–8 expresses the psychological tension which derives from the conflict between the ethical stance he has adopted (a stance based on second-order reasoning) and the claims of the *philoi* ('friends') who are affected by this stance.⁸¹ Analogously, the expression of self-division, especially the subjection of 'I' to *thumos* ('spirit' or 'anger') in Medea's great speech, is best understood as articulating the conflict between the exemplary stance that she has adopted and the claims of those affected adversely by that stance, namely her children and herself, as mother.⁸² In other words, I stress the extent to which these expressions of psychological conflict form part of the representation of the problematic hero's ethically complex stance.

I make one further general point, on the method of interpretative reading that matches the conception of the problematic hero that I adopt. The two types of modern approach discussed, that of Butcher and Bradley and that of structuralism, are correlated with certain styles of reading. The former is exemplified in Bradley's well-known practice of reading Shakespearian tragedies as pervaded by the consciousness and inner life of the ethically complex tragic heroes.⁸³ For

explained as admiring identification with the hero's overpowering, self-realizing will-power. For Bradley, it consists in the response to the conflict between good and bad qualities within the tragic hero, such as Macbeth, and to the sense that this involves 'a self-division and self-waste of spirit'; see (1955a), 86, also 87–9; see also 2.3 above, text to nn. 43–4, 51–3. For Redfield, it inheres in our response to the sense that the hero is 'trapped' by contradictions in his self-definition, and by contradictions in the social role which that self-definition reflects (1975), 104–6, 153–4; see also 2.3 above, text to nn. 59–61.

⁸⁰ See esp. *Med.* 1056–8, 1077–80.

⁸¹ See 3.3 below, text to nn. 68–85.

⁸² See 3.5 below, text to nn. 154–6, 179–90.

⁸³ On this (as exemplified in his reading of *Macbeth*) see Bradley (1955a), 87–8; Gould (1978), 47–8.

structuralism, on the other hand, the essence of the interpretative process lies in establishing the deep structure of the work: that is, the fundamental conflicts involved and the type of mediation between these. In this mode of interpretation, the speeches of the figures do not have a specially privileged place, as they do for Bradley: the work as a whole (including narrative, imagery, and forms of language) needs to be decoded so as to explicate the underlying structure.⁸⁴

The method of reading adopted here is distinct from either of these and is, in a way, intermediate between them. Like Bradley, I pay special attention to the speeches of the main figures, especially to certain key dialogues or monologues. But I do not read them in the Bradleyan manner (as disclosing—or half-disclosing⁸⁵—the inner life of subjectively realized, complex individuals). Nor do I detach them, for this purpose, from the play or epic poem as a whole, or treat the other aspects of the work as significant only in so far as they are pervaded by the consciousness of the central figures. I focus on the dialogues and monologues as constituting the primary means by which the audience engages with the reasons and reasoning which are presented as motivating the figures, and with the ethical stances that they are presented as adopting in interpersonal exchange. To this extent, I read the works mimetically (as representing a type of 'reality') and not as, for instance, a way of displaying certain patterns of conflict and mediation, as in the structuralist model. On the other hand, I also see the represented interpersonal exchange as part of a larger nexus of themes embodied in the work as a whole. One of the available models for the audience's relationship to the work of art is that of engagement with a form of 'argument' or 'dialectic' provoked by the work. In the case of the type of literature that I am concerned with here, this model is especially appropriate, in that the works concerned seem designed to activate debate or 'dialectic' on central issues of human life.⁸⁶ The audience's response

⁸⁴ See 2.3 above, esp. text to n. 55, and text to n. 92 below.

⁸⁵ As Gould brings out (1978), 47–8, Bradley's method treats the figures as if they have an independent psychological life which the play only partly discloses and about which it invites us to speculate. For a sophisticated restatement of Bradley's idea that drama invites us to speculate about, and to 'construct', character, see Easterling (1990). See also n. 68 above.

⁸⁶ A common tendency of much recent critical theory is to stress the role of the audience, or reader, as playing an active role in 'creating' the work of art rather than being the passive recipient or 'observer' (see e.g. Goldhill (1990), 111–14, discussing

to the motivating reasoning and ethical stances of the central figures constitutes a crucial part of the audience's participation in this dialectic.

I adopt this mode of reading because it seems to bring out certain aspects of the conception of the person (the objective-participant one) which, in my view, underlines Greek poetry as well as philosophy. But I also think that this mode of reading helps to underline the character-bearing significance of certain key features of the form of Greek epic and tragedy. I am thinking especially of epic and tragic dialogue, and also of the fact that monologues, in these works, are situated in a formal context which is dominated by dialogue. I think that the subjective-individualist strand in modern thinking and cultural life predisposes us to give a privileged status to actual or virtual monologue, as a specially appropriate vehicle for expressing this conception of the person. I am thinking especially of the novel, which (whether or not it is narrated in the first person) has often served, and been interpreted, as the vehicle of a distinctively 'first-personal' viewpoint, that is, the individual's unique and subjective view of herself and her world.⁸⁷

Drama, by its very nature, is less amenable to being shaped and interpreted in this way than the novel (or the lyric poem or the Romantic *lied*).⁸⁸ But some modern drama (I am thinking especially of Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neill) is centred around certain key 'confessional' moments, in which the figures disclose, in monologues, or in response to interrogatory dialogue, experiences or insights which have acquired special significance within the figures' first-personal understanding of their own lives.⁸⁹ Thus, Bradley's

Barthes). I prefer the related notion of participation in an 'argument' or 'dialectic'. For a discussion of a Greek tragedy (Euripides' *Hippolytus*), conducted in these terms, see Gill (1990a).

⁸⁷ See *Introd.*, text to n. 38. This fact is reflected in the extent to which recent critical analysis of 'character' (as well as of narrative) centres on the role of figures as 'foci' or 'focalizers' of the reader's 'perspective' or consciousness: see e.g. Bayley (1973); Chatman (1986), discussing Genette; Frow (1986), 238–49.

⁸⁸ I leave aside deliberate attempts to use drama as the vehicle of a solitary introspective voice (and desperately self-centred world-view), such as Samuel Beckett's *Happy Days*; or to convey the extent to which figures are locked into their own first-personal (indeed, solipsistic and incommunicable) world-views, such as Harold Pinter's *Landscape and Silence*.

⁸⁹ Particularly relevant here are Williams's *Streetcar Named Desire*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*. Gould (1978), 44–6, also contrasts the dramatic mode of O'Neill and Greek tragedy, though

interpretations of Shakespearian tragedy might be seen as superimposing, on a form that is at least partly unsuitable, a way of reading that is more obviously appropriate to the novels of Proust or Henry James, Bradley's contemporaries.⁹⁰ As has been emphasized often, a Bradleyan style of reading seems to be yet more clearly mismatched to the distinctive formal features of Greek tragedy, and to the understanding of personality embodied in those features;⁹¹ and my subsequent discussion of dialogue and monologue in tragedy, and the *Iliad*, underlines the kind of mismatch involved.

Structuralist interpretations of the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy are effective in counteracting any inclination to read those genres in a Bradleyan manner, or in a way that makes the kind of assumptions about personality that are implied in such a reading.⁹² On the other hand, structuralist analysis, with its focus on decoding the patterns of the work as a whole, is in danger of understating the central role of epic and lyric dialogue as a medium through which the audience engages with the dialectic of the work, and with the conception of personality implied by that. Although I also devote a good deal of attention to two major monologues—or, at least, speeches in a single voice—in *Iliad* 9 (308–429) and the *Medea* (1021–80), I also emphasize the extent to which both of these function, in part at least, as other-addressed dialogue. I also stress the way in which the surrounding interpersonal dialogue provides the significant context

he focuses, rather oddly, on the stage-directions, a fact that perhaps reflects the pervasive grip of the novel (with its characterizing descriptions) on modern understanding of fictional personality.

⁹⁰ As Bradley (1955a), 87–8, illustrates, his method of reading tends to attribute to the consciousness of the tragic figure an understanding of events which, even when articulated by the key figure, derives its significance from the unfolding of the work as a whole, from the interplay of voices, and from the complex of modes (including rhetorical and imagistic modes) expressed in those voices. See also Gould (1978), 47–8; for some relevant (turn of the century) dates, see nn. 43, 48 above.

⁹¹ See e.g. Jones (1962), 32–3 (reacting against Butcher's late Romantic conception of the tragic hero, 12 ff.); Dale (1969), 139–55; Gould (1978). For an earlier phase of (largely formalist) critical reactions against readings of tragedy in terms of a dominant, psychologically unified central figure, see Michelini's (1987) survey of Euripidean scholarship, esp. 20, 31–4; Zürcher (1947) is particularly important in this respect. For relevant criticism of some of the points made by these scholars, see Silk and Stern (1981), 196–7, on Jones (1962), and 308–9; Easterling (1990), 91–3, on Gould (1978); and, more generally, Goldhill (1990), 111–14.

⁹² Structuralist methods imply a reaction against the post-Cartesian tradition of conceiving the person as a self-conscious subject (of which the late Romantic critical position of Butcher and Bradley are inheritors). See further Segal (1981), 41; on semiotic developments of the structuralist approach, Culler (1981), 32–3.

for understanding the ethical and psychological stances articulated in those speeches.⁹³ As noted earlier, the presentation of the key figures of epic and tragedy in (for instance) agonistic or supplicatory dialogue provides a potent image of the conception of person that I associate with the idea of the 'self in dialogue';⁹⁴ and exploring this conception of the person, as expressed in these genres, helps to provide a form of explanation for the centrality of the formal mode of dialogue in those works.

2.5 ACHILLES IN *ILIAD* 9: CRITICAL FRAMEWORKS

I now offer a reading of Achilles' great speech in *Iliad* 9 (308–429) as an illustration of the approach to the question of the problematic hero outlined in 2.4 above. I aim to clarify the structure and character of the argument in the speech (that is, the type of reasoning involved and the type of dialogue addressed to his listeners) and in this way to define the kind of 'heroism' expressed in the speech. I take issue especially with one particular strand in recent scholarly discussion of this speech. This is the strand of opinion which takes Achilles, in this speech, to be rejecting the ethical values of his society and to be adopting the stance of a social 'outsider', and which sees this stance as central to our understanding of his 'heroism'. Although I am critical of this line of thought, I do not wish to suggest that it is the most misleading of the modern ways of reading this speech. That status belongs rather to the view that, by rejecting Agamemnon's gifts, Achilles puts himself, unequivocally, in the wrong, and that the consequences of this rejection, especially Patroclus' death, constitute a form of punishment for his error.⁹⁵ The latter view presupposes a simplistic 'crime and punishment' model which is, I think, quite inappropriate for the ethically complex cases represented in the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy.⁹⁶

⁹³ On *Il.* 9. 308–429 see 2.5–8 below, and on *Med.* 1021–80 see 3.5 below.

⁹⁴ *Intro.*, text to n. 41–2.

⁹⁵ See e.g. Bowra (1930), 19–22; Lattimore (1969), 47–8; Lloyd-Jones (1971), 18–27; Finley (1972), 136–7. This view depends, in part, on taking the comments of the chieftains reactively engaged with Achilles (e.g. Ajax and Diomedes) as definitive authorial judgements (see e.g. Lloyd-Jones, 18), rather than as helping to make up the ethical complexity of the situation as a whole, to which we are invited to respond. One of the difficulties in understanding Patroclus' death as a direct causal consequence of Achilles' rejection of the gifts is brought out by Redfield (1975), 106–7, referring to *Il.* 11. 604 and context.

⁹⁶ The critical responses to *Il.* and Greek tragedy discussed in 2.1–4 above express

The view that Achilles is to be understood as a heroic outsider has the merit of registering this ethical complexity and the corresponding complexity in our response which the speech invites. Some holders of this view, as I do, see Achilles' rejection of the gifts as depending on ethical reflection about the proper goals of a human life (what I am calling 'second-order' reasoning). My objection to this view turns on the interpretation of the content of this reflection, and, relatedly, of the kind of dialogue that Achilles seeks to maintain with his fellow-chieftains. I think that Achilles' conception of a worthwhile human life gives a more central place to co-operative relationships than do the holders of this view; and that Achilles still speaks as an engaged member of his group (though one who is deeply critical of the way in which it is functioning). I also think that this understanding of Achilles' stance makes better sense of his subsequent actions and responses than does the interpretation of him as an ethical outsider; and that this understanding of what his 'heroism' involves is relevant to the interpretation of many of the problematic heroes of Greek tragedy.⁹⁷

As well as contributing (as I hope) to the better understanding of Achilles' great speech, taking issue with the idea of Achilles as an ethical outsider also serves my larger objectives in this book. Like the views of Snell and Adkins discussed in Chapter 1, the idea of Achilles as an outsider is informed by one aspect of the type of modern thinking that I am calling 'subjective-individualist'.⁹⁸ As in the case of Snell and Adkins, uncovering the intellectual influences at work can help one to formulate an interpretation of the Homeric material in 'objective-participant' terms. The most obvious example of the scholarly tendency that I have in mind is Cedric Whitman's chapter on Achilles (1958, ch. 9); but his discussion encapsulates an understanding of Achilles' heroism which manifests itself in subsequent Homeric scholarship too. The core idea is that the deepest kind of ethical reflection is the quest for self-realization; the kind of

the sense that the figures involved are ethically and psychologically problematic rather than illustrations of crime and punishment. A 'crime and punishment' pattern in *Od.* may be alluded to in *Arist. Po.* 1453^a32–3, taken with 1459^b13–15; but Aristotle regards this as inferior to the ethically complex patterns found in the best type of tragedy and, perhaps, *Il.*; see Gill (1984), 150–1.

⁹⁷ On the last point, see text to nn. 204–8, also 3.4–5 below.

⁹⁸ See 1.1 above; and, on the relationship between the Cartesian and Kantian ideas presupposed by Snell and Adkins and the idea of the ethical outsider, see text to nn. 102–7 below.

selfhood to be realized is, at a fundamental level, an individual one, and the quest for self-realization necessarily sets the individual apart from his society.⁹⁹ The following quotations from Whitman convey the general character of his approach:

Achilles' own nature seeks the absolute in all its concerns . . . All human relationships require compromise; [by] their very nature . . . [they] imply violation and loss . . . But to the man who seeks a perfected glory in the heroic stance without blot, such implication is intolerable, and this is the essence of Achilles' suffering. (187)

The whole quarrel with Agamemnon was merely the match that lit a fire, the impetus which drove Achilles from the simple assumptions of the other princely heroes onto the path where heroism means the search for the dignity and meaning of the self. (193)

Achilles activated the absolute in the terms in which he had conceived it for himself . . . The absolute is the ability and right of the heroic individual to perceive—or better, to conceive—law for himself, and then prove his case by action. (213)

The language of Whitman's characterization of Achilles' heroism is evocative of several key themes of modern thinking since the Enlightenment. The idea of conceiving law for oneself recalls Kant's idea that morality presupposes autonomy (self-legislation). The idea that man's deepest quest inheres in the dynamic activity of some type of 'absolute' self or subject against the constraints of our existence as natural, mortal beings recalls Fichte or Schelling. The idea that 'the search for the dignity and meaning of the self' (p. 193) is the proper goal of ethical enquiry, and one which necessarily involves rejecting the conventional norms of communal life, recalls Nietzsche or Sartre.¹⁰⁰ The fact that Whitman's terminology evokes a number of themes in modern European philosophy is itself significant. Unlike Snell and Adkins, each of whom draws, in a relatively direct way, on a specific thinker or thinkers,¹⁰¹ Whitman presupposes the evolution of a whole strand in European thinking between Kant and the modern period.

⁹⁹ The individual is set apart from his society (1) because he is engaged in a special type of quest (for self-realization), and (2) because the kind of selfhood realized through the quest is a fundamentally individual one.

¹⁰⁰ On Fichte and Schelling, see Solomon (1988), 49–55; Gardiner (1982), 123–5; Silk and Stern (1981), 103–12; on Kant, see text to n. 102 below; on Nietzsche and Sartre, see n. 103 below.

¹⁰¹ Snell draws principally on Hegel and Kant; Adkins on Kant: see 1.1 above, esp. text to nn. 21–4, 32–6.

He presupposes, in particular, the process by which Kant's idea of autonomy takes on a more fully 'subjective-individualist' character. For Kant himself, as we saw earlier, autonomy (the subordination of oneself to universal laws) is conceived as being part of any properly moral response. It is not part of Kant's theory that autonomy necessarily involves setting oneself in conflict with conventional morality; rather he presupposes that the laws so willed are consistent with conventional moral principles. Nor does he think that self-legislation necessarily involves some special type of self-discovery or self-realization.¹⁰² But the idea that the deepest kind of moral quest involves those further dimensions becomes central to the thought of some post-Kantian thinkers, of whom Nietzsche and Sartre are the most obvious examples.¹⁰³ While the intellectual strands contributing to this development are complex, one factor seems to have been the centrality that the notion of 'self' or 'subject' acquired in post-Cartesian thinking. What is relevant here is not so much the Cartesian belief that all mental processes are accompanied by self-consciousness but rather the assumption that the first-personal viewpoint is in some way authoritative and fundamental to all knowledge, and the associated primacy given to this viewpoint in much subsequent theorizing about selfhood and personal identity.¹⁰⁴ It is the evolution of these strongly individualistic conceptions of autonomy and authenticity in post-Enlightenment thinking that Whitman presupposes, and it is the familiarity of these ideas on which he relies for the intelligibility of his picture of 'heroism'.

The story of the emergence of these individualistic ethical theories in an intellectual tradition running back to Kant, or Rousseau (and, in a different way, Descartes) has been told several times in recent years, in ways that are relevant to my larger topic as well as helping to make sense of some scholarly assumptions about Homeric heroism. MacIntyre argues that Nietzsche's radical individualism, expressed in his ethic of 'self-creation', is the logical outcome of Kant's attempt to ground morality on the (alleged) capacity of the individual moral agent to act as a self-legislator, in a way that does

¹⁰² See 1.3 above, text to nn. 107–8; also Hill (1989), 96–101; and, on Kant's conception of the self, see Collins (1985), 55–8, and Kitcher (1984).

¹⁰³ On Nietzsche, see 2.3 above, text to nn. 46–8; on the primacy for Sartre of the individual's subjective perspective in ethics, see Dilman (1991); and, on the contrast between Sartre and Kant in this respect, see Kerner (1990), chs. 13–16.

¹⁰⁴ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 17–19; 6.2 below, text to nn. 10–14.

not depend on the ethical character of her community.¹⁰⁵ More recently, in a complex and many-layered study of the same period, Charles Taylor presents the subjectivist and individualist strands in post-Enlightenment thought as part of the intellectual framework that makes it difficult for the modern individual to feel at home in her community, and, more broadly, in her moral and metaphysical 'world'.¹⁰⁶ Robert Solomon has drawn attention to the pervasive use of the concept of 'self' or 'subject' as a foundational idea in post-Enlightenment metaphysics and ethics.¹⁰⁷

It is the subjective-individualist strand that I have primarily in view here, which helps to explain the conception of heroism presupposed by Whitman and other scholars. As Taylor underlines, the relevant lines of thought do not just form part of the philosophical tradition but are embedded in literature, and in the whole cultural life of the period. Earlier, Trilling, in a famous study (1972), emphasized the power of the idea, in literature as well as theory, that only a heroic 'outsider' can realize the deepest ethical goal, of being 'true to oneself', an idea which underlay Romantic literary figures from Goethe's Young Werther onwards. Earlier still—and at a time of special relevance for understanding Whitman and other Homeric scholars—Colin Wilson, in a book which had an extraordinary impact (1956), described, and expressed, the power of the idea of the outsider.¹⁰⁸ For many Americans in the mid-1950s (when Whitman and Adam Parry were writing on the heroism of Achilles), the heroic outsider was symbolized by the brooding, alienated, half-articulate figure of James Dean, as he appeared in the films *Rebel Without a*

¹⁰⁵ This view seems to ignore the difference between Kant's universalist and objectivist conception of autonomy and the subjectivist-individualist conception of Sartre or Nietzsche (see n. 45 above). MacIntyre's defence would be that he identifies the fundamental character of Kant's theory (and, as he believes, its fundamental weakness, i.e. the lack of a grounding in an ethical community and intellectual tradition), and one which was simply laid bare by subsequent thinkers such as Nietzsche; see (1985), chs. 4–6, 9, 18, and 'Postscript to the Second Edition', esp. 265–9.

¹⁰⁶ C. Taylor (1989), ch. 8 (on Descartes), 83–8, 363–7 (on Kant), and, on the general thesis, ch. 25; cf. the account of the modern predicament outlined in 6.5 below, text to nn. 91, 102.

¹⁰⁷ See Solomon (1988), referring to the (diverse) concepts of 'transcendental' selfhood and subjectivity in e.g. Idealist, Romantic, phenomenological, and existentialist theories. Solomon also notes the critique of these concepts in recent structuralist and post-structuralist thinking, 194–202; on this point, see also C. Taylor (1989), 456, 462–5, 488–90.

¹⁰⁸ Wilson (1956) ran through ten impressions in the first year of publication.

Cause and East of Eden, a figure who has, perhaps, a special relevance for Parry's contribution.¹⁰⁹

In 1956, Parry published a short article on 'the language of Achilles', which has sparked off a whole debate about the role of language, as an expressive and communicative medium, in understanding Achilles' 'heroism', as manifested in his great speech in *Iliad* 9. Although Parry's thesis is informed by some specifically scholarly issues,¹¹⁰ I think that it also reflects a predominant intellectual concern at the time he wrote, that of the failure of communication between the individual—more particularly, the individual who is alienated by the search for his true self—and his society. Thus, Parry analyses the 'candour' of Achilles' speech as that of someone who sees 'the awful distance between the truth that society imposes on men and what Achilles has seen to be true for himself' (1956, 5–6). Because of the formulaic character of Homeric discourse (that is, the fact that it is made up of what Homeric society recognizes as truths): 'Achilles has no language with which to express his disillusionment. Yet he expresses it, and in a remarkable way. He does it by misusing the language he disposes of. He asks questions that cannot be answered and makes demands that cannot be met' (p. 6). For instance, he asks 'But why should the Argives be fighting against the Trojans?', and demands that Agamemnon 'pays back all my heart-rending grief' (*Il.* 9. 337–8, 387, tr. Parry). Whether Parry has described correctly the significance of Achilles' questions and demands is something to be considered shortly. But the point to be noted here is the way in which Parry formulates the view of the hero as outsider in terms of language: 'Achilles' tragedy, his final isolation, is that he can in no sense, including that of language (unlike, say, Hamlet) leave the society which has become alien to him' (p. 7). Like the James Dean figures of 1950s cinema, the resentful, half-articulate 'rebels without a cause', Parry's Achilles cannot bear to speak the language of his society, or, if he does so, it is only as a medium for expressing his own alienation.

The idea that Achilles, like the problematic heroes of Greek

¹⁰⁹ Both films were released in 1955. My point is not that Parry's account of Achilles is specifically modelled on James Dean but that it reflects a contemporary idea of the heroic outsider which Dean symbolized.

¹¹⁰ Principally, the question of the extent to which the formulaic method (the study of which was pioneered by Parry's father) allowed scope for individual creativity in poetic expression, and also allowed the characterization of individual figures by means of language. See further Martin (1989), 148–52.

tragedy of which he is the prototype, is to be understood as an 'outsider', of the kind so far described, has persisted in later Homeric and tragic criticism.¹¹¹ But it is the issues raised by Parry's essay that I want to pursue; despite being brief and impressionistic, it has long been recognized as one of the most suggestive discussions of the speech. One question, which Richard Martin (1989) properly emphasizes (152 ff.) is that of what Parry means by 'language'. Is he referring to the Homeric stylistic idiom or the thought of the speech (and its relationship to the ethical values of Homeric society) when he says that Achilles 'misuse[s] the language he disposes of' (Parry (1956), 6)? Given Parry's assumption that both Homeric style and Homeric ethical values are highly determinate and 'formulaic' (and that the two types of 'language' are closely interconnected),¹¹² the question does not present itself as a significant one for Parry. But if one queries the claim that either kind of language is 'formulaic', in the relevant sense, the question becomes a significant one. Martin, in the most careful analysis of Achilles' speech so far attempted, focuses on the extent to which the speech is formulaic in terms of Homeric idiom. He shows how Achilles' speech is stylistically non-standard at every level from the selection of individual words to the shaping of Homeric genres of discourse.¹¹³ Martin's analysis is a valuable one, and I draw on it in my own account of the speech. But Martin offers no equivalent analysis of the extent to which Achilles' speech is standard or non-standard in its ethical thought (the other sense of 'language' to which he draws attention), though some of his stylistic comments offer indications on this point.¹¹⁴ While some of

¹¹¹ See e.g. Knox (1964), esp. 50–2, and text to nn. 204–7 below. The idea leaves some impress in Redfield (1975), though it is not consistent with his broadly structuralist approach, summarized in 2.3 above, text to nn. 56–61: see e.g. Redfield, 105 (my italics): 'Achilles, then, is a marginal figure in his society, but a hero's place is on the margins; as so often happens in social systems, Achilles' uncertain status makes possible for him a kind of ethical fundamentalism and purity of spirit.'

¹¹² More precisely, the formulaic character of the two types of 'language' (their being fixed and incapable of modification) is taken to be interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

¹¹³ Martin (1989), 160 ff.; see also ch. 2 on the Homeric genres of discourse, i.e. the command, the boast-and-insult contest, and the recitation of remembered events.

¹¹⁴ His conception of Achilles' 'heroism' is correspondingly limited by his failure to explore the speech as an expression of Achilles' engagement with ethical issues and as part of the larger dialectic of the poem. He defines Achilles' special status in the poem as that of his sharing the poet's own voice (characterized in terms of stylistic effects, notably those involving 'expansion', ch. 5), rather than as holding a special place within the dialectic which the poem as a whole expresses. See also n. 172 below.

the other discussions of Parry's essay do take up this question,¹¹⁵ the speech has not been analysed closely from this standpoint. This is what to do here; and, in the process, I aim to bring out the inappropriateness of the idea of the hero as an ethical outsider which Whitman and Parry presume.

2.6 ACHILLES' SPEECH AND SARPEDON'S

Making sense of the thought of the speech involves several, related aspects. One is that of recognizing the structure of the argument (and of seeing that *there is* an argument);¹¹⁶ and, for this purpose, it is important to understand the relationship between the generalizations, or quasi-generalizations, in the speech and the more specific statements.¹¹⁷ The generalizations are clearly important in understanding the 'second-order' reasoning contained in the speech (the reflection about worthwhile human goals). But the generalizations are not, I think, *identical* with the second-order reasoning, which needs to be determined by reading the speech as a whole. It is crucial also to read the speech as addressed to Achilles' fellow-chieftains and to see the way in which its argument (the structure of first- and second-order reasoning) is relevant to, and directed at, them. Finally, there is the question of the relationship of the thought of the speech, as thus analysed, to that contained in other speeches which make analogously general claims about the worthwhile goals of a chieftain's life.

This latter question is one of special importance here. A common move in this connection is to take the famous speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus in *Iliad* 12. 310–28 as representing a normative statement of Homeric ethics (or what some scholars like to call the 'heroic code').¹¹⁸ If we contrast the general statements about the chieftain's life made or implied in that speech with those made or implied in Achilles', it is easy to conclude, as Parry and others do, that Achilles'

¹¹⁵ Esp. Claus (1975); see 2.6 below, text to nn. 128–30.

¹¹⁶ For Parry, by contrast, the speech is 'passionate, confused, continually turning back on itself' (1956), 5; for Redfield, it is 'an explosion of rage' (1975), 17.

¹¹⁷ The principal generalizations are made in 9. 318–20, 341–2, 406–9; but 316–17, the rhetorical questions of 337–9, the demands of 379–87, and the choice of life announced in 410–20, can also be interpreted as implying related general ideas.

¹¹⁸ On the oversimplified view of Homeric ethical life often implied in the idea of the 'heroic code', see Schofield (1986), 13–18; and discussion in 1.3 above, text to n. 133–4.

stance is that of an 'outsider', wholly rejecting his society's values.¹¹⁹ This move is questionable for several reasons. For one thing, it is a dubious interpretative move to take *one* speech (Sarpedon's) out of its narrative context and to take it as being *the* normative statement of Homeric ethical principles. Striking and memorable though it is, Sarpedon's speech constitutes only one of a number of speeches in which Homeric figures are moved by moments of crisis or isolation into formulating, or half-formulating, the general principles underlying their deliberation.¹²⁰ All such speeches, as well as needing to be placed in their immediate context, need also to be placed in the continuing argument or 'dialectic' of the work as a whole.¹²¹ Also, if we do seek to correlate the thought of Sarpedon's speech with Achilles' speech, we need to compare like to like. We need to compare the thought of the two speeches, each one taken as a whole, and not to compare Sarpedon's whole speech with the generalizations or quasi-generalizations in Achilles' speech, wrenched from their context in Achilles' argument.¹²²

I begin my account of the speech by making such a general comparison between the thought of the two speeches. The thought of Sarpedon's speech is relatively straightforward; that of Achilles' speech is much less so, and I defend in full the interpretation given first in outline. Sarpedon asks Glaucus, rhetorically, why the two of them are honoured with special privileges in Lycia, and why all men there look on them 'like gods' (312). He answers his question by saying that they must 'stand in the forefront of the Lycians' (*μέτα πρώτοισι*) and take part in 'blazing battle', so that any of the Lycian fighters may say that their leaders are not 'lacking in fame' (*οὐ . . . ἀκλῆεις*), but that they have 'noble strength' and fight in the forefront of the Lycians (315–21). He adds that if, by escaping from battle, they could live agelessly and immortally, he would not so urge Glaucus into 'battle that gives glory' (325). But, in reality, since they must die somehow, like all mortals, 'let us go and win the right to boast over someone, or give this to another' (326–8).

The thinking involved here can be clarified by reference to the patterns of ethical motivation discussed in connection with the

¹¹⁹ For this move, see e.g. Parry (1956), 3–7; Redfield (1975), 99–105; on Redfield's overall position, see 2.3 above, text to nn. 56–62 and n. 155 below.

¹²⁰ Achilles' speeches in *Il.* 21. 106–13, and 24. 525–33 are further obvious examples.

¹²¹ On this idea, see n. 86 above.

¹²² This is, in effect, what Parry does in (1956), 6.

deliberative monologues (1.3–4 above). Referring to the monologues can help to clarify what I mean by describing the kind of reasoning found in this speech as 'second-order' reasoning. I suggested that the reasoning displayed in the deliberative monologues could be analysed (in Aristotelian terms) as being of a means–end or rule–case type.¹²³ For three of the monologues at least, the end or goal is broadly the same (acting honourably);¹²⁴ and, in the most straightforward case, that of Odysseus, this goal is also made explicit in the 'rule' that 'whoever is to be best [*aristeuein*] in battle must stand his ground strongly, whether he is hit or hits someone else' (11. 409–10). I am classifying this type of reasoning as primary, or 'first-order', because it provides the basis for determining the course of action to be adopted in a specific case.¹²⁵ By 'second-order' reasoning, I understand reflection *about* the goals or rules which are operative in first-order reasoning. In both speeches, the second-order reasoning is of the same general type. It consists in reflection about the kind of interpersonal context, and the kind of human life, in which such a rule holds good.¹²⁶ It is obvious that the speeches differ in one, massive, respect. Sarpedon presents his existing interpersonal context (and the life lived against this background) as one in which this rule holds good, whereas Achilles does not. But this difference should not obscure the similarity in general form of their reflections; or the similarity in the conception of the kind of interpersonal context and life that they regard as valid.

The kind of interpersonal context presupposed is clarified by Walter Donlan (1981–2), in a study of types of 'reciprocity' (in the exchange of goods and favours) in Homeric society. He underlines the existence, alongside one-to-one modes of exchange (whether compensatory or compactual) of a mode of 'generalized reciprocity', in which a less determinate mode of exchange leaves open the possibility of unforced generosity on either side.¹²⁷ Relatedly, David

¹²³ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 77–84.

¹²⁴ See 1.2 above, text to n. 83, taken together with the variations between the reasoning of the monologues discussed in 1.3–4 above.

¹²⁵ This is the type of reasoning which Aristotle associates especially with 'deliberation' (*bouleusis*); see refs. in n. 123 above.

¹²⁶ On the relationship between this pattern of second-order reasoning and that found in Greek ethical theory, see 6.3, text to nn. 50–7, 68–71; also 4.7, text to nn. 250–78, 290–316.

¹²⁷ See Donlan (1981–2), esp. 154–71; also Havelock (1978), 107–17, on reciprocity and Homeric formulaic patterns. For differing estimates of the value of the idea of generalized reciprocity in interpreting Homeric ethics, see Gill (1998),

Claus underlines the importance of the idea that Homeric chieftains, in helping each other, see themselves as doing so as a favour, or as a 'gratuitous' gesture, and not under the constraints of a rigid system of co-operative exchange.¹²⁸ These features of Homeric modes of relationship are relevant, in slightly different ways, to both the speeches.¹²⁹ It is also helpful to bear in mind the approaches of Williams and MacIntyre considered earlier, in which Homeric ethical attitudes are analysed as modes of engagement with social roles and practices, and as expressing the 'internalization' of appropriate interpersonal responses, such as those relating to shame and honour.¹³⁰ Donlan and Claus help to specify the characteristically Homeric form of the ethical attitudes whose validity Williams and MacIntyre urge us to recognize.

With these points in mind, we can understand Sarpedon as articulating the mode of relationship between the Lycians and themselves that provides the larger context for their willingness to stand in the forefront of battle and to risk their lives. It is not appropriate to see Sarpedon as providing a non-moral motivation (in terms of material rewards and social status or of public disgrace) for them to act in this way.¹³¹ He is better understood as rendering explicit a mode of social interchange that is normally taken for granted by both parties, and which issues in the acts of unforced generosity on each side specified in the speech. The fact that he is referring to a mode of motivation which is highly internalized is clear from the second part of his speech (322–8). Here, the act of standing in the forefront of battle is presented as characteristic of the most worthwhile type of life available, given the fact that human beings are necessarily mortal.¹³² The second point presupposes the first: it is presumed

309–13; Postlethwaite (1998); Zanker (1998). On reciprocity in ancient Greek culture, see Gill, Postlethwaite, and Seaford (1998).

¹²⁸ See Claus (1975), esp. 20–5; Claus interprets in this light the otherwise puzzling *Il.* 17. 220–6.

¹²⁹ Sarpedon's concern is with the relationship between chieftains and people, whereas Achilles' is with that between fellow-chieftains.

¹³⁰ See 1.3 above, esp. text to nn. 109–25.

¹³¹ Hainsworth (1993), 270, note on *Il.* 11. 4 seems to interpret the passage in this way, as providing a practical (not moral) reason for risking one's life. For the view of Homeric ethics that might promote such a reading of Sarpedon's speech (as expressing the attitudes of a 'results-culture' and a 'shame-culture'), see e.g. Adkins (1960) and (1970), discussed in 1.1 above, text to nn. 35–6.

¹³² This theme has added poignancy because of Sarpedon's status (like Achilles') as

that, whether winning or losing, to fight in the forefront of battle is to enter an arena 'that brings glory', *κυδιάνειραν* (324–5).¹³³ But what Sarpedon advocates is not the winning of glory, as such, but the kind of life in which a willing entry into battle is an appropriate act. Indeed, even to say that he 'advocates' this life may be an overstatement. Rather, he *reminds* Glaucus of the kind of life, and the correlated patterns of relationships, that they are already living; and thus, at the crucial moment of battle, he places in a larger context the specific act in which he urges his fellow-chieftain to join him.

Achilles' great speech is, obviously, more complex than Sarpedon's. But it also has a line of argument which can be summarized; and it is one whose content can be defined by reference to that of Sarpedon's speech. In essence, Achilles' point is that Agamemnon's seizure of *Brisëis* has undermined the relationship of generalized reciprocity which should exist between chieftains, and hence made it impossible for him (or others) to perform the 'gratuitous' acts of nobility characteristic of this relationship. More precisely—and more controversially—Achilles claims, in effect, that Agamemnon's undermining of this relationship is so great that it cannot be restored by the compensatory reciprocity of gifts.¹³⁴ In the absence of this type of relationship, he affirms that it is no longer worthwhile for him to put his life at risk in gratuitous acts of nobility: he may as well return to his own home and become involved in the nexus of types of *philia* associated with a life there. However, his presentation of this latter point indicates that his statement is designed as a exemplary gesture rather than an announcement of a fixed decision. As becomes increasingly clear during the course of Book 9, he still regards himself as a member of the co-operative group of chieftains, even though his own participation has been rendered impossible, as he sees it, by Agamemnon's seizure of *Brisëis*, and by Agamemnon's failure to restore the basis of their relationship.

son of a god, a point underlined in Zeus' reluctance to accept his approaching death in *Il.* 16. 433–61.

¹³³ The presence of the larger interpersonal context (the Lycians who repay brave action with appropriate respect, 310, 312, 318, 320–1) ensures that, win or lose (328), standing among the first in battle will bring glory.

¹³⁴ See further text to nn. 175–81 below. Seaford (1994a), 65–73, also sees Achilles' quarrel with Agamemnon as a crisis of reciprocity, but sees the crisis as more fundamental than I do, and as resolvable only through the mediation of ritual, especially through Achilles' shared meal and death-ritual with Priam in *Il.* 24.

Like Sarpedon's speech, Achilles' involves second-order reasoning; as in Sarpedon's speech, this serves to substantiate first-order reasoning, and thus provides the basis for acting in a given way. The generalizations and quasi-generalizations in Achilles' speech (while they are specially important in gauging the character of the second-order reasoning), need to be taken in the context of Achilles' argument as a whole. The content of Achilles' second-order reasoning is of the same general type as Sarpedon's. It relates to the kind of relationship (one involving generalized reciprocity) in which acts of gratuitous nobility make sense, and to the question of what constitutes a worthwhile *human* life, a life lived in the awareness of one's mortality. The great difference between the thought of the two speeches lies in the fact that, whereas in Sarpedon's case this second-order reasoning is taken to validate involvement in combat, in Achilles' case it is taken to invalidate it.¹³⁵ But this fact, while it makes Achilles' stance 'problematic' (in the sense discussed in 2.1–4) in a way that is not true of Sarpedon's, does not mean that Achilles is wholly rejecting his society's ethical values and becoming an 'outsider', as Whitman and Parry suppose. Rather, his stance, and the second-order reasoning on which it depends, embody an appeal to the norms of co-operative action among chieftains. His claim (albeit a controversial one) is that it is Agamemnon's breach of those norms, and his failure to repair the relationship of co-operative nobility, that legitimates his stance, and not an appeal to an ethic of purely individual self-realization.

2.7 ACHILLES' ARGUMENT

In looking at the speech in more detail, Martin's (1989) analysis helps us to make out more clearly the structure and tone of the argument. In particular, by analysing the combination of formulaic and non-formulaic elements in Achilles' phraseology and speech-patterns, Martin helps us to see how Achilles' argument, while unusual, is *intelligibly* unusual, in the context of Homeric language.¹³⁶ For instance, Martin shows how the first part of

¹³⁵ On the correlated difference between the style (and the degree of explicitness) with which the second-order reasoning is expressed in the two speeches, see 2.8 below, text to nn. 190–4.

¹³⁶ Martin's analysis is presented as a corrective to Parry's claim that Achilles 'misus[es] the language he disposes of' (1956, 6; see Martin, 148–9): Homeric style has

Achilles' speech (315–45) constitutes a non-standard version of a regular Homeric pattern in which a speaker rejects a piece of advice with the phrase 'you will not persuade me'.¹³⁷ This helps us to see that this whole section of Achilles' speech is couched as an—unusually extended—account of the reason why Achilles will not be persuaded by Odysseus' presentation of Agamemnon's offer. Martin also underlines how the theme of persuasion, or rather of not being persuaded, serves to punctuate the speech and to form its structure. This is signalled as its main theme at the beginning (309–11, 315); the reason for Achilles' not being persuaded is stated in 316–45 (ending with 'you will not persuade me'). In the next section (346–87), Achilles looks to the future consequences of his not being persuaded, culminating in the striking assertion that Agamemnon would not persuade him until he had paid back all his spirit-grieving insult (386–7). The remaining section draws out further consequences of his not being persuaded (388 ff.); and the theme recurs at the end, in connection with Achilles' dealings with his fellow-chieftains.¹³⁸ This not only helps us to see that Achilles' speech constitutes a structured argument.¹³⁹ It also helps us to see that the argument centres on the grounds for being or not being persuaded; as we shall see, those grounds are stated in large part in terms of the ethics of co-operative relationships between chieftains.

In the first part of the speech (308–45), much turns on the way that one interprets the generalizing comments, and on how they are read as expressing the second-order reasoning embodied in the speech. Achilles' first generalization (312–13), while indicating his concern with the proper modes of co-operative discourse, does not raise major issues in this connection: 'As hateful to me as the gates of

the kind of flexibility that enables Achilles to speak in a distinctive way without 'mis-using' it. But Martin shows how Achilles can formulate types of thought which are unfamiliar in a way that forms an intelligible use of Homeric style. On the degree to which Achilles is presented as intelligible to his fellow-chieftains, see text to nn. 199–201 below.

¹³⁷ This version is non-standard in that the reason for not being persuaded precedes the formulaic 'you will not persuade me' (345), though that idea is stated in a third-personal form in 315, 'I do not think that Agamemnon, son of Atreus, will persuade me'. A further element in the pattern, the speaker's intended course of action, is delayed until 356–67. See Martin (1989), 202–3.

¹³⁸ See esp. 417, 422–3, 429, discussed in text to nn. 185–6 below. See Martin (1989), 206–7.

¹³⁹ By contrast with those who see the speech as 'confused' and an 'explosion of rage' (n. 116 above).

Hades is the man who hides one thing in his heart and says another.¹⁴⁰ The succeeding lines, however, have been at the centre of debate about the speech:

there has been no gratitude [*charis*] for always fighting endlessly with enemies. There is an equal lot for the man who stays back and the one who fights hard; we are honoured in the same way, cowards and brave alike; the man who has done nothing dies in the same way as the one who has done much (316–20).

These lines, especially the generalizations of 318–20, have been taken to mark Achilles' rejection of the ethics of heroic society; and so have his subsequent questions (notably, 'Why should the Greeks make war on the Trojans?') and his supposedly impossible demand on Agamemnon.¹⁴¹ But, to make proper sense of the lines, it is essential that we situate them within Achilles' argument, and also that we place that argument in the context of Homeric modes of co-operative relationships. In following the argument, a key word to note is 'since' (*ἐπεὶ*, 316). The line of thought seems to be this:¹⁴² 'Agamemnon will not be able to persuade me, or the other Greeks, since [given the way Agamemnon has behaved], there has been no *charis* [gratitude] for endlessly fighting with enemies [Agamemnon's enemies, as he underlines later]. [In this state of affairs] the fighter and non-fighter are on the same level and neither have their proper *moira* ['lot' or 'fate', that is, honour, *time*, or its opposite]; and, when they die, as equally both must die, they do so *in the same way* [*ὁμῶς*], without honour.'¹⁴³

The thought of these and the succeeding lines can, like Sarpedon's speech, be explicated by the discussions of the ethics of co-operation

¹⁴⁰ The importance of candour in discourse between chieftains is reiterated in 369–70, 421–2, with a pointed contrast to Agamemnon's 'deceit' (371, also 372–3, 375–6). It is also often supposed that the lines carry an ironic comment (by the narrator) on Odysseus' tactful omission of the final lines of Agamemnon's message (9. 158–61, omitted in 300–6).

¹⁴¹ See 337–8, 386–7, and Parry (1956), 6.

¹⁴² In the following paraphrase of 315–20 connections implied in the Greek are put in brackets.

¹⁴³ I take it that *moira* is, thus, deliberately ambiguous ('lot' = reward, 'fate' = death); and that the two senses involved are spelled out in the two following lines, i.e. *ἐν . . . ἱῇ τιμῇ* ('in the same honour', or dishonour), and *κάρθ' ὁμῶς* (the latter phrase conveying a further ambiguity, 'dies equally' and 'dies in the same way', i.e. dishonoured, and an ambiguity which reinforces that of *ἱῇ μοίρᾳ*). See also Claus (1975), 18 n. 7; in this reading, line 320 is not out of place in its context, as is claimed e.g. by M. D. Reeve (1973), 195 n. 3.

between chieftains by Claus and Donlan. Achilles presupposes a system of generalized reciprocity in which one chieftain co-operates with the enterprises of another, and does so as an act of noble generosity, a 'favour' which earns proper 'gratitude' (*charis* can carry both senses).¹⁴⁴ Although such co-operation, like the associated ethical attitudes, is typically expressed in the exchange of gifts or booty, it is essential that we distinguish the form of such exchange from that involved in the 'balanced' reciprocity that also forms part of Homeric chieftainly relationships. What is involved in generalized reciprocity is not one-to-one exchange (*so much* co-operative combat for *so many* gifts). Rather, the chieftain generously engages in combat, and thus risks his life (a point underlined in 322), without any specified reward. The chieftain whose interests are served is expected to proffer gifts in return; but also to do so as an act of unforced generosity and not as a *quid pro quo* (let alone as *payment*).¹⁴⁵ The form of relationship involved here is one in which the warrior-chieftains contribute their booty into a common pool and the leading chieftain (Agamemnon) redistributes it. One of Achilles' complaints in these lines, conveyed in the colourful language of 323–33, is that the mode of exchange has been grossly inequitable in his case. His contribution to the common pool has been massive; but Agamemnon has redistributed very little to him, keeping much for himself (333). This complaint should not be taken to signify that Achilles expects a one-to-one exchange of combat (and booty) for redistributed gifts. What he finds offensive is the fact that Agamemnon's mode of generosity, as expressed in the redistribution, falls so far short of what would count as an appropriate gesture.¹⁴⁶

Whatever the background to this latter charge,¹⁴⁷ it is clearly coloured by the succeeding, and substantive, charge: that Agamemnon's act of taking back Achilles' prize of honour (*geras*), from him alone, constitutes a flagrant breach of chieftainly co-operation. In Donlan's terms, Agamemnon is accused of introducing 'negative

¹⁴⁴ On *charis*, see Martin (1989), 213–14, who notes that Achilles' words in 9. 316–17 are repeated by Glaucus in 17. 147–8, as part of his criticism of another breach in chieftainly co-operation, Hector's failure to defend Sarpedon's corpse.

¹⁴⁵ See Donlan (1981–2), esp. 142 (*noblesse oblige* as one of the motifs of a system of generalized reciprocity); 143 ff. (balanced reciprocities, taking the form of compacts or compensation); and 159 ff. (the type of generalized reciprocity involved in the chieftainly exchange of gifts among Greek leaders). See also Claus (1975), 19–20, and 23–4.

¹⁴⁶ See Donlan (1981–2), 167, on the expectation of an *implied* balance of favours and rewards (which does not mean a precise *quid pro quo*) in generalized reciprocity.

¹⁴⁷ See Il. 1. 122, 149, 231, 2. 226–31, 254–6; also Donlan (1981–2), 163 and 167.

reciprocity' (of a type normally expressed in inter-tribal raiding) into a milieu whose interchange is normally conducted in the mode of generalized reciprocity.¹⁴⁸ The breach is rendered more gross, as Achilles claims, by the fact that the prize of honour in question is 'the wife [or concubine] that pleases my heart' (*ἄλοχον θυμαρέα*, 336) a point whose relevance to the generalized reciprocity involved in their expedition is spelled out plainly by Achilles:

Why should the Greeks make war on the Trojans? Why did the son of Atreus gather people together and lead them here? Was it not for Helen with the lovely hair? Are the sons of Atreus the only members of the human race who love their wives? [I ask this] since [*ἐπεὶ*] any good and sensible man loves and cares for his own woman, as I loved her from the heart, though she was the prize of my spear (337–43).

The question that Achilles asks in 337–8 is the one which Parry thinks 'cannot be answered' in terms of the 'language' of Homeric ethics: analogously, Whitman takes Achilles' lines to express his rejection of the 'compromise' necessarily entailed by human relationships and to signal his heroic assertion of the 'absolute'.¹⁴⁹ But there are grounds for claiming that Achilles' complaints presuppose the validity of the ethics of chieftainly (or 'heroic') interchange, and are, indeed, only fully comprehensible on that basis. As Achilles' previous actions (pictured in 323–33) make plain, Achilles has been prepared to risk his life as an act of generous nobility on behalf of Agamemnon's quest to recover Menelaus' wife Helen. But the generalized reciprocity underlying his willingness to do so is dangerously undermined, he argues, by Agamemnon's seizure of *his* wife (in his case, a concubine), *his* prize of chieftainly generosity. Far from being 'unanswerable' in terms of Homeric ethics, Achilles' questions, and their possible answers, are only intelligible in terms of those ethical values, and on the assumption that Achilles appeals to (and, by inference, accepts) their validity.¹⁵⁰ It is the force of this appeal that explains the logic of the couplet that concludes this part of the speech: 'Since [*ἐπεὶ*] Agamemnon took my prize of honour from my hands and deceived me, let him not try me, who knows him

¹⁴⁸ II. 9. 334–6, reiterated in 344, 367–9, 375; see Donlan (1981–2), 162, (1993), 161.

¹⁴⁹ Parry (1956), 6; Whitman (1958), 187, the first of the passages cited above, text to nn. 99–100.

¹⁵⁰ The jagged enjambments and reiterated questions of 336–9 underline the force of these questions for his interlocutors; on my reading, their ethical (as well as rhetorical) force should be fully intelligible to them.

well; he will not persuade me' (344–5). Achilles thus marks the preceding part of his speech (from *πεισέμεν*, 'be persuaded', 315 onwards) as an explanation of his refusal to be talked into doing as Agamemnon asked. Agamemnon's breach of co-operative ethics has been too great for the relationship to be restored in this way.¹⁵¹

The next section of the speech follows,¹⁵² in one way, logically from this conclusion. Achilles looks ahead to a future in which he and the Achaeans will go their separate ways, he to go home to Phthia and they to find some other way of restoring their fortunes. On the face of it, he seems to have become an 'outsider' in the sense that he is determined to leave the group, even if he has reached this decision on grounds that reflect his having been a member of the group and having subscribed to its ethical values. But closer inspection of the lines shows that his position is more complex than it seems. On the one hand, in referring to the future, and past, actions of the Greeks without him, Achilles underlines the extent of his own contribution as a warrior, and the catastrophic effect of his absence.¹⁵³ On the other, his projected departure is pictured (not without a certain grim irony) almost as a performance, or social event, which they are invited to attend.¹⁵⁴ These points indicate that, in spite of the surface content of these lines, he still thinks of himself as one of their number, and of this—pointed—departure as a kind of social gesture.¹⁵⁵ Other features of the passage fit in with this idea. In describing his past and projected actions, he uses the term 'wish' three times, twice (unusually in Homeric idiom) negatively. This point, together with a significant later usage of the verb, seems

¹⁵¹ See nn. 134, 137 above and see further text to nn. 173–4 below.

¹⁵² i.e. 346–387, with a transitional phase in 375–7 (reiterating 344–5).

¹⁵³ See 346–55, esp. 351–5; in effect, he suggests that the planning (*φραζέσθω*, 347) which he recommends to Agamemnon will be useless.

¹⁵⁴ See 356–61 (esp. 359–61): 'you will see, if you wish and if this is of any concern to you . . . my ships sailing to the fish-filled Hellespont', and 362–7.

¹⁵⁵ Redfield (1975) also registers the complexity, or ambivalence, of Achilles' position here: 'Achilles is trapped by this self-definition, which permits him neither reconciliation nor retreat' (104). Agamemnon's removal of Achilles' honour leaves him no place in that community; but Achilles' grounds for objecting to that removal rest on his (communal) status as a warrior, and, by leaving Troy, he would give up that role and those grounds (104–5): see also the summary of Redfield's position in 2.3 above, text to nn. 56–62. This view is suggestive; but, in line with his type of structuralist approach (discussion in 2.3, text to nn. 92–4), he refrains from exploring in detail the argumentation by which Achilles thinks through his position. Thus, while Redfield describes Achilles as a 'social critic' (103), he does not analyse the content of the social criticism involved.

designed to underline the central importance, in chieftainly modes of co-operation, of a warrior's being able to act willingly (or 'gratuitously', as Claus puts it) and not under the compulsion, or pressure, which Agamemnon has been applying.¹⁵⁶ The idea that he is still part of an ethical community, though one which excludes Agamemnon, is clearer still in these lines:

my prize of honour, lordly Agamemnon, who gave it to me, took it back with insulting violence [*ἐφ' ὑβρίζων*]. Announce everything to him, as I tell you, publicly, so that other Greeks too may feel indignation at him, in case he still hopes to deceive one of them, clothed in shamelessness as he always is; but, he would not, shameless though he is, dare to look me in the face (367–73).

His words convey his sense that his case is exemplary, in ethical terms, and his desire to communicate its exemplary (and cautionary) character to his fellow-chieftains.¹⁵⁷

The fact that Achilles still thinks of himself as, in some sense, a member of the group of chieftains may serve to explain the variations in Book 9 in his stated intentions: he is going tomorrow (9. 357–60, 428–9), he will decide tomorrow about going or staying (618–19), he will stay until Hector reaches his tent (650–5).¹⁵⁸ Snell takes these variations (which are not marked as explicit changes of mind) as evidence for his view that 'Homer does not know genuine personal decisions', as he understands these, that is, self-conscious assertions of an autonomous will.¹⁵⁹ I think that the variations are better explained by the framework which I offered in Chapter 1 for understanding Homeric deliberation. Actions are conceived as motivated by reasons (rather than by 'acts of will'), and interpersonal considerations (especially considerations deriving from the person's engagement with her social role) are crucial in determining

¹⁵⁶ See esp. 356: 'But now, since I do not wish [*οὐκ ἐθέλω*] to fight with god-like Hector'; also *οὐκ ἐθέλεσκε* ('used not to wish'), 353, and *ἢν ἐθέλησθα* ('if you wish'), 359; also 397 and 429, discussed in n. 171 and text to n. 186 below. On 'not wish' as a rare usage in Homer, see Martin (1989), 195; on the gratuitous in Homer, see Claus (1975), 20–1, 23–4; also van Wees (1998), 15–20, on reciprocal ethics generally.

¹⁵⁷ The lines convey his wish to 'speak' to his fellow-chieftains (see also 309–13 and 421–6), and his sense of sharing common ethical principles, as well as his judgement that Agamemnon (who cannot 'face' him) is the ethical outsider.

¹⁵⁸ These shifts have been noted since antiquity: see Plato's (ironic) treatment in *Hippias Minor* 370–1.

¹⁵⁹ See Snell (1960), 20 and (1930), 147–9; also discussion in 1.1 above, text to nn. 5–12.

what counts as a reason for acting in a given way.¹⁶⁰ As noted earlier, Homeric deliberation can be communal or interpersonal, as well as individual, and expressed in dialogue, as well as in monologue;¹⁶¹ and Achilles' decisions are of the former type. The variations in his intentions reflect the stance that he takes up in interpersonal exchange at any one stage (and the type of gesture that he wants to make) and the reasons to go, or to delay, or to stay, that the appeals of his interlocutors provide. At this stage in Book 9, his point is best made by an announced departure tomorrow; but the appeals of his *philoi*, Phoenix and Ajax, provide reasons, of differing strength, for varying his intention and the gesture that he is making.¹⁶²

It is worth bearing in mind these indications that Achilles still thinks of himself as, in some sense, a member of his group, as we turn to the most controversial section of the speech:

His gifts are hateful to me, and I have no respect for him. Not if he gave me ten and twenty times as much as he has now, and more besides from some other source, not if he gave me as much as comes into Orchomenus, as much as comes into Egyptian Thebes . . . not if he gave me as many gifts as there are grains of sand and dust, not even so would Agamemnon win over my spirit, at least until he had paid me back all his spirit-grieving insult (378–87).

It is the rejection expressed in these lines that has led some scholars to claim that Achilles here puts himself, unequivocally, in the wrong, in terms of Homeric ethical norms.¹⁶³ Parry and Whitman, while qualifying the claim that Achilles is clearly open to condemnation, share the view that Achilles acts in a way that is non-standard in terms of the ethics of his society. However, they add the proviso that he does so in the search for ethical standards which go beyond, or outside, those of his society.¹⁶⁴ Clearly, Achilles' rejection is highly controversial in terms of Homeric ethical standards; Ajax's

¹⁶⁰ See 1.2–3 above; esp. 1.2, text to nn. 81–4, 92–7; 1.3 text to nn. 110–12, 130–2, 144–8.

¹⁶¹ As suggested in 1.2 above, text to nn. 60–1, 98–104, there are grounds for seeing interpersonal deliberation (in dialogue) as the standard mode, and the deliberative monologue as a derivative (internalized) version of this mode, and one that results from special types of isolation on the part of the speaker.

¹⁶² See 9. 607–19 and 9. 644–55; also 16. 60–3 (also 64–100), a further variation in Achilles' position, made in response to Patroclus' appeal; see further 3.3 below text to nn. 86–91.

¹⁶³ See refs. in n. 95 above.

¹⁶⁴ See 2.5 above, text to nn. 99–100, 110–11.

comments alone would be sufficient to establish that.¹⁶⁵ But it does not follow from this that Achilles' rejection does not embody attitudes, or rest on reflection,¹⁶⁶ of a kind that Achilles can see as being derived from these standards.

Here, as elsewhere, it is important to place the lines in their context in the argument. As Martin points out, the lines culminate the second main section of the speech; and the key word 'persuade' (*πείσει*, 386) develops the main theme of the first section of the speech.¹⁶⁷ It is also essential to relate Agamemnon's offer of gifts, and Achilles' rejection of them, to the regular modes of gift-giving in Homeric society and to the significance of those modes. On Agamemnon's side, the gifts are clearly intended to be taken as compensatory, and as carrying an admission of error (though not one passed on by speech to Achilles).¹⁶⁸ Odysseus also refrains from passing on a further part of Agamemnon's message, though one which is implicit in the scale and character of the gifts themselves: this is that, by accepting them, Achilles is to concede that Agamemnon is 'more kingly' (*basileuteros*) as well as senior in birth.¹⁶⁹ In spite of Odysseus' tactful elision of Agamemnon's final words,¹⁷⁰ Achilles certainly picks up the latter significance of Agamemnon's gifts. His sardonic suggestion that Agamemnon find a son-in-law 'who is more fitting to him and more kingly [*basileuteros*]' makes this plain, as does his correlated assertion of his own status and resources as an independent chieftain.¹⁷¹ The linguistic extravagance with which

¹⁶⁵ Ajax points out, in criticism of Achilles' rejection, that other people are prepared to accept compensatory payment for the killing of a brother or son, i.e. a much graver offence than Agamemnon's (9. 632-6).

¹⁶⁶ For similar criticism of the scholarly positions referred to in nn. 163-4, see Donlan (1993), 167 nn. 26, 28. For the 'second-order' reasoning embodied here and elsewhere in this speech, see 2.8 below, text to nn. 188-98.

¹⁶⁷ See 315, 345, also 371-3, 375-6; Martin (1989), 202-3, 206-7, and text to nn. 137-8 above.

¹⁶⁸ See 9. 106-13, 115-20 (omitted in Odysseus' speech) and 122-56 = 264-98; on compensatory gifts, see Donlan (1981-2), 143-5.

¹⁶⁹ 9. 160-1, referring back to one of the central issues in the debate in *Il.* 1, esp. 185-7, 275-81.

¹⁷⁰ These do not appear in 9. 300-6. As noted earlier (n. 140 above), Achilles' generalization in 312-13 presents itself to the audience as a comment on Odysseus' tactful omission.

¹⁷¹ See 9. 388-400, esp. 392; note also the expressions in 397-8 (*ἦν κ' ἐθέλωμι*, 'any-one I wish', *μοι . . . ἐπέσσυτο θυμὸς ἀγῆνωρ*, 'my lordly spirit drives me'), in which Achilles asserts his wish to marry as he pleases and not as Agamemnon prescribes. The expressions also imply the chieftain's right to act 'gratuitously' (see Claus (1975), 24-5). On Agamemnon's lavish gifts as an expression of Agamemnon's desire to

Achilles rejects the gifts in 378-85 matches the material extravagance of the gifts themselves, and expresses Achilles' repudiation of Agamemnon's implicit assertion of superiority.¹⁷² But this is only part of what is embodied in Achilles' rejection. The connection, in the lines preceding the rejection, of Agamemnon's seizure of Achilles' gift-prize (*geras*), with the associated collapse of Agamemnon's status as a trustworthy associate seems to carry a further implication. This is that Agamemnon, through the 'negative reciprocity' involved in his violent seizure (*ἐφύβριζων ἔλετο*) of Achilles' gift has lost any claims that he had to be treated as a reliable gift-giver. Having failed—and so signally—in the 'generalized reciprocity' required of kingly generosity, he has lost the right, in Achilles' eyes, to be treated as an acceptable donor of compensatory gifts.¹⁷³ (It is not the level of compensation that Achilles objects to; his point is that *no* compensation, however great, is acceptable from such a person.) It may also be that, as Claus suggests, in effect, Achilles takes the very offer of compensation itself as being—under these circumstances—a threat to his right, as a chieftain, to act out of noble generosity, rather than in response to the social pressure exerted by the compensatory gifts.¹⁷⁴

So far, I have treated Achilles' rejection of the gifts as total; but is it? Achilles' response ends with the couplet: ' . . . not even so would Agamemnon win over my spirit [*thumon*], at least until he had paid back all his spirit-grieving insult [*θυμαλγέα λώβην*]' (386-7). Parry regarded this as an impossible demand, and this view has been echoed by many subsequent scholars.¹⁷⁵ But others point out that, in the modes of Homeric interchange, there are ways in which Achilles might well suppose that Agamemnon has, indeed, *not* yet paid back

manifest his superior kingliness (and to place Achilles as his subordinate), see Donlan (1981-2), 171, (1989), 2-6, (1993), 160, 164-6.

¹⁷² The linguistic extravagance is, thus, not simply a product of what Martin calls 'the expansion aesthetic' which is especially at work in Achilles' speeches, as in some narrative comments (Martin (1989), 223-4), but also serves to make a point within the debate, and thus within the larger dialectic of the poem. So does Achilles' subsequent telescoping of Agamemnon's list of gifts (9. 406-7, see Martin, 219); see also n. 114 above.

¹⁷³ See 9. 367-8, 370-3, 375-6 (picking up 312-13, 315, 344-5); also text to nn. 142-51 above.

¹⁷⁴ Claus (1975), 23-4.

¹⁷⁵ Parry (1956), 6; M. D. Reeve (1973), 194-5, presents the demand rather as a logical absurdity (how can Agamemnon *pay back* his insult, as distinct from *paying for* it?), and, in this sense, as one that cannot be met. See also Martin (1989), 207.

all the spirit-grieving insult which he heaped on Achilles by seizing his prize of honour. Agamemnon has not come himself to see Achilles (a point underlined by Achilles in 372–3),¹⁷⁶ but has sent other chieftains, and sent them as his agents. Although two of them (Phoenix and Ajax) clearly rank as special friends (*philoï*) of Achilles, none of them has visited him in that capacity prior to their mission as Agamemnon's representatives.¹⁷⁷ Even now they do not appeal to Achilles in formal supplication (nor, of course, does Agamemnon), as does Priam, successfully, under far less propitious circumstances in *Il.* 24. 477–506.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, as noted earlier, Odysseus does not actually convey to Achilles the fact that Agamemnon apologizes, in so far as he admits that he has committed an appalling, 'deluded error' (*ἐμὰς ἄρας . . . δασάμην*, 9. 115–16). Agamemnon finally does so in person in *Il.* 19. 85–138, though couching his apology in self-exculpating terms; and this elicits from Achilles a qualified acceptance of it as an apology (270–5).¹⁷⁹ Odysseus substitutes for this admission a passage of fatherly advice (couched as advice attributed to Achilles' own father), a substitution which places Achilles in the role of a headstrong youth in need of correction rather than a wronged fellow-chieftain.¹⁸⁰ Thus, it is not, after all, impossible to see ways in which Achilles might think that Agamemnon has not yet paid back all the spirit-grieving insult that he has heaped on Achilles. We may infer that Achilles' statement that he will not accept Agamemnon's gifts 'at least until' (*πρίν γ'*) Agamemnon does so, may be a way of conveying the fact that the demand *could* be met.¹⁸¹ If so, this gives a further reason for thinking that Achilles'

¹⁷⁶ To this extent, Agamemnon fails to take Nestor's advice to appease Achilles 'with gentle words' as well as soothing gifts (9. 113); see also Taplin (1990), 71.

¹⁷⁷ The latter complaint may be implied in Achilles' words to Phoenix, 9. 612–15; see also his initial response to their arrival, 9. 197–204. See further Edwards (1987), 233–4.

¹⁷⁸ Given the central role played by supplication in the structure of *Il.*, emphasized by Seaford (1994a), 69–71, its *absence*, in this key scene, may be noteworthy. See Tsagarakis (1971), 259–63; Thornton (1984), 126–7.

¹⁷⁹ The self-exculpation lies in the attribution of complete responsibility for this (voluntary) act to the gods, in 19. 86–90, despite the reiteration of the admission of his own delusion (*δασάμην*) in 19. 137–8. See further Taplin (1990), 75–6, (1992), 206–8; and, on Achilles' qualified response, restoring responsibility to Agamemnon (together with the gods) in 270–5, Taplin (1990), 77, (1992), 209.

¹⁸⁰ See 9. 252–9, replacing 9. 115–20, as a prelude to 264–98 (= 122–56). On this mode of discourse, see Martin (1989), 80–1; see also 3.3 below, text to nn. 56–7.

¹⁸¹ It is true that 9. 386–7 does not spell out what he requires to meet his demand, but this may be part of his point: Agamemnon ought to know already what the ethics

rejection of the gifts is expressed in ways that show his—rigorous—commitment to the ethics of co-operative relationships between chieftains, and does not constitute an appeal to some independently conceived ethic.

Achilles' response to Agamemnon does not, however, end here. After rejecting Agamemnon's offer of his daughter in marriage (a rejection which forms a natural sequel to the rejection of the other gifts),¹⁸² Achilles goes on to affirm, in emphatic, generalizing terms, that all the wealth of Troy—let alone the gifts Agamemnon has to offer—is not worth the sacrifice of a man's life, which, once lost, cannot be recovered.¹⁸³ Then, in contrast to the usual picture of Achilles as doomed necessarily to a short life, he presents himself as having two possible fates, and as choosing, at least by implication, the longer life at home rather than the short one which will bring 'everlasting fame' (*κλέος ἄφθιτον*).¹⁸⁴ Here, it might seem, Achilles does, unequivocally, become an 'outsider', both in the sense that he is leaving his group to go home, and in the sense that he rejects utterly the valuation of co-operative combat which underlies the whole expedition, and which is endorsed in Sarpedon's reflective speech.

The question, whether or not this is so, can only be addressed fully by discussing the 'second-order' reasoning which is embodied in Achilles' speech (as in Sarpedon's), as I do shortly. But some suggestive indications about Achilles' stance are worth noting in the final lines of the speech, following his rejection of the short life of glory. As elsewhere in the speech, these lines indicate—what the previous rejection seems to deny—that Achilles still thinks of himself as one of their number. He offers them advice: first, that they should make the same 'choice of life' as him, and go home, and then that they should find some better plan than that embodied in their approach to them to save themselves (417–26).¹⁸⁵ The phraseology in

of the chieftainly relationship require, and not need to be told. If he does not know, this serves to confirm Achilles' analysis of the problem.

¹⁸² See n. 171 above.

¹⁸³ 401–9; on 406–7 as a (dismissive) reference to Agamemnon's gifts, see Martin (1989), 219.

¹⁸⁴ On Achilles as doomed to a short life see e.g. *Il.* 1. 352, 417; 18. 95, 458. Achilles does not actually state that he is choosing the inglorious life (a point that may not be without significance); but this preference is clearly implied by 406–9 and 417–18.

¹⁸⁵ The first point indicates that (despite the special character of Achilles' destiny, or possible destinies) he envisages the 'choice of lives' as an issue that presents itself to

which he gives this latter advice, referring to the *geras* . . . *geronton* (the 'privilege' of elders, namely to advise the Achaean leaders), reiterates the theme of his own loss of *geras*, the grounds of his continuing quarrel with Agamemnon.¹⁸⁶ Also, by a seemingly redundant addition to his invitation to Phoenix to stay with him, he closes the speech with words which exemplify the point he has underlined repeatedly: that chieftains, in their treatment of each other, must allow room for freedom of action and for 'gratuitous' gestures. 'Let Phoenix stay here with us and spend the night, so that he can accompany me home by ship tomorrow, if he wishes [*ἢν ἐθέλων*]; I will not force him to go [*ἀνάγκη δ' οὐ τί μιν ἄξω*]' (427-9). Although his words repeat his intention to leave, his final line signifies his adherence to what should be, as he claims, a fundamental feature of their shared life; and this parting shot, like the announced intention to leave, should probably be taken as an exemplary gesture to his group.

2.8 ACHILLES' GREAT SPEECH AND HEROISM

In summing up the argument of Achilles' speech, and analysing the kind of 'second-order' reasoning involved, it is helpful to refer again to Sarpedon's speech.¹⁸⁷ Both speeches can be seen as constituting reflection on the kind of principle or rule which figures in Odysseus' 'first-order' reasoning: that 'whoever is to be best in battle must stand his ground strongly, whether he is hit or hits someone else'.¹⁸⁸ The reflection is of the same general type: it centres on the question of the kind of interpersonal context and the kind of life (specifically, the kind of *human* life) which provide a significant context for the application of this principle. Indeed, the two speeches convey a similar answer to this question: namely, that it is the right kind of interpersonal context (one involving the proper exercise of 'generalized reciprocity') that makes the life in which its principles holds

all the chieftains. In the second point, his formulation (esp. *ἐμεῦ ἀπομνησίαντος*, 'in my absence through anger', 426) reminds them of the impact on them of the considered removal of his contribution; cf. 423-6 with 346-55 in this respect.

¹⁸⁶ 421-2: see also 334, 344, 367. The implication, again, is that Achilles still wants to 'speak' to his fellow-chieftains, and to express his sense of shared ethical values.

¹⁸⁷ II. 12. 310-28; see 2.6 above, text to nn. 123-33.

¹⁸⁸ II. 11. 409-10: see 2.6 above, text to nn. 124-5.

good the most worthwhile kind of human life.¹⁸⁹ The great difference between the two speeches inheres, of course, in the fact that Sarpedon takes this interpersonal context to be present (and to legitimate his fighting in the forefront of battle), whereas Achilles does not.

Associated with this difference is a divergence in the style of discourse and mode of argument; and this bears on the question how far the words uttered can be treated as representing the content of the second-order reasoning involved. In Sarpedon's speech of straightforward, positive encouragement to his fellow-chieftains, the words uttered can be taken as corresponding, more or less, to the kind of general reflection involved.¹⁹⁰ In Achilles' case, the relationship between the two is more complex. The bitter, corrosive style and the negative character of his message make it a more complex task to recognize the positive content of the general thoughts involved, and to see that they are essentially the same as those of Sarpedon. I suggested earlier that this point comes out in connection with the lines: 'There is an equal lot for the man who stays back and the one who fights hard; we are honoured in the same way, cowards and brave alike; the man who has done nothing dies in the same way as the one who has done much' (318-20). These statements should not be taken in isolation, as expressing Achilles' general view of human relationships and the nature of a human life. It is only when we provide the appropriate context of argument (Achilles is complaining that this is the state of affairs produced by Agamemnon's 'negative reciprocity' in seizing his prize of honour) that we can begin to recognize the positive reflections underlying Achilles' bitter assertions.¹⁹¹

Similar considerations apply to the generalizations about what makes it worthwhile to risk one's life (401-9) and to Achilles' statements about his choice of life (410-16) at the end of the speech. It is under the circumstances which Achilles has been at pains to

¹⁸⁹ See 2.6 above, text to nn. 132-5. See also the minor difference stated in n. 129 above.

¹⁹⁰ I leave aside small points such as that Sarpedon casts the reflection partly in the form of a rhetorical question (12. 310-14, answered in 315-21), and in the form of an (impossible) conditional sentence, 322-5, followed by a negative statement in 326-7. There is no real difficulty in seeing the positive, general content embodied in these modes of expression; and so the exhortation in 328 (based on the inference to be drawn from that content) follows naturally from what precedes.

¹⁹¹ See text to nn. 140-6 above.

underline (Agamemnon's failure to establish the right context for co-operative risk-taking and mutual generosity) that it is not worthwhile for a man to risk his life in war.¹⁹² Again, it is under these circumstances that Achilles feels it appropriate to say that he has a choice of fates (whereas he does not feel this under the very different circumstances of *Iliad* 18),¹⁹³ and to indicate that the long, inglorious life represents the preferable kind of human life.¹⁹⁴ But it does not follow that these statements constitute what Achilles would always, or normally, want to present as the basic principles of human life. Indeed, the bitter, sardonic tone and the larger thrust of his argument imply precisely the opposite.

A further complication in correlating Achilles' words with his implied second-order reasoning is that he is speaking to two different audiences: on the one hand, Agamemnon (whom he presents as, in effect, outside their ethical community, and presumably deaf to complaints couched in ethical terms); and, on the other, his fellow-chieftains, to whom such complaints are, in principle, intelligible.¹⁹⁵ For Agamemnon, only a—virtually—total rejection of his offer is appropriate;¹⁹⁶ but this must be couched in a way that will enable more ethically perceptive chieftains to recognize the grounds of the rejection, including the second-order reasoning (the conception of a proper human life and set of relationships) that underlies those grounds. This dual objective serves to explain the distinctive form of Achilles' speech; his massively negative rejection of the gifts is set in the context of a complex argument in which he explains, by a mixture of bitter complaints and sardonic generaliza-

¹⁹² The catalogue of rejected objects in 401–7 carries the same implied content as the catalogue in 379–85: it is not worthwhile for a man to risk his life for material rewards alone (without the appropriate interpersonal attitudes), and it is material rewards alone (and not a corresponding change in interpersonal attitudes) that Agamemnon is offering. See Claus (1975), 24–5 and 2.7 above, text to nn. 163–74.

¹⁹³ See *Il.* 18. 79–126, in which the claim made on Achilles by Patroclus' death silences any thought that a longer life at home is preferable. On the 'silencing' of considerations in ethical choice, see McDowell (1980), 370, and Ch. 1 n. 145 above; also below 4.2, text to nn. 53–65; 5.6, text to nn. 263–91.

¹⁹⁴ The idea of weighing up, and choosing between, available human lives is a theme which is common to 9. 318–20, 410–16, and 12. 322–8; see further, on the theme of the 'choice of lives' in Greek thought, Gill (1983b), 469–70, esp. n. 8.

¹⁹⁵ The speech is repeatedly couched as a message to be given by his listeners to Agamemnon; see e.g. 347, 369–70, 376–7, or to 'the others', 417–18, 421–6. Agamemnon is presented as outside the ethical community in 315–20, 367–73, discussed in 2.7 above, text to nn. 140–6, 156–7.

¹⁹⁶ See 378–87 (esp. 386–7).

tions, the reason why he is not 'persuaded' by the offer of gifts.¹⁹⁷ A further complication lies in the fact that one of the key implications of his speech (that a certain level of bad behaviour disqualifies the person concerned from being regarded as an acceptable donor of compensatory gifts) is highly controversial.¹⁹⁸ On this point, Achilles is pressing the implications of the ethic of 'generalized reciprocity' so far that there must be a risk (especially given his bitter, indirect mode), that his reasoning may not be fully intelligible even to ethically perceptive chieftains.

Whether or not his fellow-chieftains are presented as taking the full force of his argument (including this latter point) is not altogether clear. Odysseus, reporting the results of the embassy to Agamemnon, states merely the fact of Achilles' rejection; but a subsequent comment by Diomedes indicates that some of the attitudes underlying the rejection have not escaped notice entirely.¹⁹⁹ Within the embassy itself, both Phoenix and Ajax deal with the question of the acceptability of compensatory gifts as a means of undoing wrong. Phoenix argues from the example of Meleager that accepting compensatory gifts is a valid way to enhance one's own status (though his narrative, significantly, shows Meleager himself responding quite differently).²⁰⁰ His argument does not address fully Achilles' implied claims about the kind of person from whom compensatory gifts are to be considered as acceptable. Ajax comes closer to doing so: his counter-example, the acceptance of compensation from the killer of one's brother or son (9. 632–8), suggests that compensation of the right kind may be acceptable from *anyone*. The associated appeal by Ajax, that Achilles should show a sense of respect or shame (*aidos*) in response to their claims as his greatest *philoi* among the Greeks, also picks up one of the central themes of

¹⁹⁷ On the structure of the argument, see 2.6 above, text to nn. 136–8.

¹⁹⁸ See 2.7, esp. text to nn. 163–74.

¹⁹⁹ See 9. 677–92: 680–92 are based mainly on 417–20, 424–9 (including the telling line 429, cf. 692) discussed in 2.7 above, text to n. 186. Diomedes' subsequent comments, while critical in tone, may pick up Achilles' emphasis on the importance of allowing him (and other chieftains) scope for exercising independent judgement and entering combat as a gratuitous gesture and not under pressure, an emphasis implicit in the fact of the rejection and in 692: 'He is a proud man [*ἀγῆνωρ*], in any case; and now you have driven him much further into his pride [*ἀγηνόριον*]. Let us leave him alone, whether he goes or stays; he will fight whenever the heart in his breast tells him to and a god stirs him up' (699–703).

²⁰⁰ See 9. 515–28, 600–5; also 573–96, showing that Meleager's mind was changed by supplication (and out of pity for his *philoi*) and not by gifts, a point ironically in contrast to Phoenix's, but relevant to Achilles' case.

Achilles' speech: that appeals must rest on a basis of properly grounded *philia*.²⁰¹ But none of these comments can be considered as responding in full to the ethical content (the combination of generalized reasoning and specific charges) of Achilles' disqualification of Agamemnon as a donor of compensatory gifts. To this extent, it seems that Achilles pushes to (or even beyond) the limits of acceptability, and intelligibility, the implications of the ethics of generalized reciprocity, and of the gratuitous gesture, as he interprets these.

However, in doing so, Achilles illustrates one of the points that I made in outlining my approach to the question of the problematic hero in epic and tragedy, and of the way that we respond to him. I suggested that part of the special sympathy that we feel for the problematic hero inheres in the fact that we engage with his ethical reasoning (including his generalized, 'second-order' reasoning) in a way that the other figures represented cannot do, given their 'reactive' involvement with the consequences of the hero's problematic act.²⁰² This general model applies here. Whether or not the other figures take Achilles' point about the ethical preconditions for accepting compensatory gifts, it is—and must be—their primary concern to find what arguments they can to induce Achilles to re-enter battle on their behalf. But the fact that his fellow-chieftains do not confront Achilles' reasoning fully, and on an equally general level, does not, in itself, show that he is appealing to ethical grounds which they are incapable of recognizing. The thrust of my interpretation is that his argument is based on what he sees (understandably) as essential principles of co-operative nobility in his society, rather than on some private and self-related ethic.²⁰³ Correspondingly, in so far as the poem invites us to give a special sympathetic attention to Achilles (in spite of the problematic character of his stance and its consequences), it does so by exhibiting, and inviting our engagement with, reasoning of this type.

²⁰¹ 9. 628–32, 639–42; see further 3.3 below, text to nn. 65–7.

²⁰² See 2.4 above, text to nn. 67–77.

²⁰³ It may be that, in speaking of Achilles' determination to seek the 'absolute', Whitman (1958) had in view his (problematic) insistence on the maintenance of the best, or essential, ethical principles of his community, regardless of the cost to others and himself. But Whitman's language, as illustrated above, 2.5 above, text to nn. 99–100, certainly does not make it plain that those ethical principles are conceived as those of his society; rather, it suggests the kind of ethic that the hero 'conceives for himself' (text to nn. 100–3 above).

I think that the line of interpretation developed in connection with this speech of Achilles could be applied, in an illuminating way, to the key speeches of other problematic heroes in Greek tragedy. The figures who are most obviously relevant are the Sophoclean figures (and Euripides' Medea) to whom Bernard Knox ascribes the 'heroic temper'.²⁰⁴ Knox himself analyses the speeches of these figures (and their exchanges with other figures) as an expression of a certain character-type, or 'temper', one that includes stubborn independence of mind and a determination to stick to a certain position, whatever the consequences. Knox's analysis of the manifestation of this character-type through monologue and dialogue is famous for its coherence and telling use of detail. But what is missing from his treatment is a full explanation of the ethical issues on which the problematic heroes take their stand.²⁰⁵ Correspondingly, he does not provide an understanding of the way in which the heroes appeal (in their second-order reasoning) to ethical principles which they regard as basic to their society. Thus, although Knox does not present these figures as ethical individualists or 'outsiders' in quite the way that Whitman does, they take on something of that character by default (in the absence of exploration of the communal ethical grounding of their stances).²⁰⁶ The interpretation of the problematic heroes along the lines suggested here would both efface that character and would lead to a significantly altered view of the central concerns of the plays from that which Knox himself offers. I do not develop this claim fully here, although I make some related suggestions about another Sophoclean figure at a later stage.²⁰⁷ But I offer now an interpretation of the motivation and stance of the most ethically problematic of all the possessors of the 'heroic temper', Euripides' Medea. I also think that the line of thought proposed here has implications for tragedies which do not centre on problematic heroes (or on public argument and debate) but on ethically complex situations, in which the 'dialectic' of the play depends on the proper

²⁰⁴ See Knox (1964), chs. 1–2; esp. 50–2, in which Homer's Achilles is presented as the prototype of these figures. See also Knox (1979), ch. 21, on E. Med.

²⁰⁵ For a contrastingly full discussion of these, see Blundell (1989). A partial exception in this respect is Knox (1979), ch. 21: see n. 209 below.

²⁰⁶ Sometimes, Knox's description of the heroic type seems coloured by the concepts of ethical individualism (see e.g. (1964), 5), but this line of thought is not developed in the explicit way that it is by Whitman (1958), ch. 9.

²⁰⁷ On Ajax, see 3.4 below.

analysis of those situations, as displayed in the language of the plays.²⁰⁸

2.9 EURIPIDES' MEDEA: THE CASE FOR INFANTICIDE

The key act of Euripides' Medea, that of infanticide, is more ethically problematic than any committed by Achilles. None the less, I think that the presentation of her motivation for infanticide lends itself to analysis of the same general type as that deployed in the case of Achilles. My point is not simply that, as Knox and others have pointed out, Medea motivates herself to her act of revenge (and justifies it) by reference to the ideas of honour and shame which are of central concern to Achilles and other Homeric figures.²⁰⁹ This fact is an indicator of a deeper kind of resemblance between the two cases. I think that Medea's infanticide is to be understood, like Achilles' rejection of Agamemnon's gifts, as an exemplary gesture. This gesture, despite its horrific character, expresses an ethical stance in her quarrel with Jason. This ethical stance, like Achilles', depends on second-order reasoning which centres, like his, on the place of interpersonal relationships in the living of a human life. There are certain differences in the content of their reasoning, reflecting in part the fact that the mode of interpersonal bonding (or *philia*) that Medea has in view is marriage, a fact which carries further implications for the interconnection of lives over time.²¹⁰ But these differences are not such as to negate the basic similarity in the way in which, in my view, they function as 'problematic heroes', and, in so doing, express a shared conception of the key questions of human life.

As a point of entry to this topic, I take up an interesting, but relatively undiscussed, question regarding Medea's motivation: her

²⁰⁸ I have in view plays such as Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* and *Women of Trachis*. Euripides' *Hippolytus* might be considered an intermediate case in that the dialogue is rich in ethical implications (which are crucial to the central 'dialectic' of the play), but the drama does not centre on set-piece arguments or on the stance of a single problematic hero: for a relevant analysis of the play, see Gill (1990a).

²⁰⁹ See *Med.* 401–6, 797, 807–10, 1049–55, 1059–61, 1242–6; also Bongie (1977); Knox (1979), 297–300; Pucci (1980), 92–100; Foley (1989), 73–83; Williamson (1990), 25–6.

²¹⁰ Notably, there is the implication that lives so bounded may issue in the production of children, a fact which is fundamental to this play.

reason for changing her vengeance-plan from killing Jason (along with his new wife and father-in-law, 374–5) to killing her children (791–6). On the face of it, this question may seem to be answered adequately by Medea's response to the chorus' protest at her announcement of the latter mode of vengeance: 'this is the way in which my husband may be most deeply hurt' (*μάλιστα δηχθείη*, 817), because he will be deprived both of his existing sons and of the chance of having any more from his new bride (794–5, 803–6). Medea does not specifically explain her reason for *revising* her vengeance-plan; but the natural inference is that she sees now the advantages of making him suffer, instead of simply terminating his life, even at the cost of becoming herself 'the most unhappy of women' (818). But this raises the further question: why is Medea now prepared to use a method of vengeance which will make her suffer, and suffer intensely, alongside her former husband? This question is raised, in effect, by the chorus, though dismissed by Medea (818–19); and it is one to which her announcement of her revised plan gives no obvious answer.²¹¹

One possible line of explanation might be to see in this revision an example of the unexplained shifts in motivation and attitude that are taken by some critics to be characteristic of Euripides' dramatic style, with its focus on localized effects and on puzzling and bizarre reversals of the audience's expectation.²¹² It is a feature of the play that, as it proceeds, it offers differing indications about the form of Medea's vengeance, as well as about the attitude and state of mind in which she will extract it.²¹³ Indeed, it is, in part, the fact that the

²¹¹ The revision is not explained adequately by the 'heroic' language (i.e. the shamefulness of being humiliated by her enemies) which accompanies the later as well as the earlier announcement of her vengeance-plan (401–6, 797, 807–10). Indeed, the claim that the life of one who takes vengeance (at all costs) on one's enemies is the 'happiest' (*εὐκλέστατος βίος*, 810), is queried by the chorus' claim that she will in this way become 'the most miserable of women' (*ἀθλιωτάτη γυνή*, 818). Alternatively, it might be argued that the children's role in the handing over of the poisoned robe (780–9) necessitates their death, since, if Medea does not kill them, the Corinthians will (a point made by Medea to herself in 1059–63 and 1236–41). But, leaving aside the question whether the children have to serve in this role, or whether, having done so, they have to be left behind (on which, see 1045 and 1058, taken together with Foley (1989), 84–5), the idea of killing the children in order to hurt Jason is a new theme in the play, the introduction of which requires explanation.

²¹² See esp. Zürcher (1947), taken with n. 91 above; also Gould (1978), 52–4.

²¹³ See e.g. 89–95, 98–118 (hints that Medea may kill her children in an act of savage, 'bestial' violence); 368–94 (killing of Jason *et al.* plotted with ruthless cunning); 772–810 (the killing of the children, along with Jason's new bride, embraced

nature of Medea's motivation for her vengeance is kept in this way at the forefront of dramatic attention that justifies my focus on the question of Medea's reason for changing her plans.²¹⁴ But I think that this play is, in fact, centred coherently on a single nexus of themes, and constitutes a continuing argument or 'dialectic' on those themes, and that the indications given about the character of Medea's motivation form part of this dialectic. Thus, to raise the question of Medea's reasons for changing her vengeance-plan is not to invite us to look 'behind' the surface of the play for some half-disclosed pattern of psychological motivation. It is to raise a question about the way in which Medea's two announcements of her plans are related to the shape of the play as a whole and to the unfolding dialectic embodied in this.²¹⁵

In the structure of the play, two exchanges occur between Medea's first and second announcement of her vengeance-plans: the set-piece debate (*agon*) between Medea and Jason and her dialogue with Aegeus. Although the latter makes some contribution towards the development of the relevant themes,²¹⁶ it is the *agon* with Jason that, I think, provides the principal context for understanding Medea's motivation for her revised plan. In gauging the significance of the *agon*, it is helpful to place it against the background of the embassy in *Iliad* 9, which (as Knox points out) provides the prototype for many tragic exchanges between angry, isolated heroes and others who approach them.²¹⁷ Jason's mode of dealing with Medea represents a version of that applied by Odysseus and Phoenix to Achilles, in which the appeal to the other to control his anger and 'be reasonable' is combined with advice about what is in the other's best

in awareness of the pain that this will cause her); 1021–80 (Medea's agonized debate about the plan to kill her children); 1236–50 (Medea urges herself to go through with the act of killing her children despite its terrible cost to her).

²¹⁴ Thus, to raise this question is fundamentally different from Bradley's notorious raising of the question how many children Lady Macbeth had (1956), 486–92, on which see Gould (1978), 47 n. 14.

²¹⁵ On the issues involved here, see 2.4 above, text to nn. 83–6, and Gill (1990a), 77–9.

²¹⁶ Aegeus' childless state and his desire for children to issue from his marriage (669–73) are clearly relevant to the formation of Medea's new vengeance-plan; significant too is Aegeus' endorsement of Medea's criticism of Jason's way of treating his former *philoi* (694–9): see Schein (1990), 62–3.

²¹⁷ See Knox (1964), 50–2 (also refs. in n. 209 above). The similarities and the differences can, thus, be taken as defining the character of the exchange for an audience familiar with *Il.* 9 and its tragic variants.

interests.²¹⁸ More precisely, Jason's mode of approach represents a significantly intensified version of the type applied by those figures to Achilles. The Homeric figures do not deny that Achilles' anger at Agamemnon has been justified so far; indeed, the offer of compensatory gifts signifies the willingness to make good a previous offence.²¹⁹ Jason, by contrast, denies that her anger has ever been justified; and, although he also offers material goods, these are not presented as implying any admission of wrongdoing. From his opening words, he denies (in a mode that we shall see is highly characteristic of him) that her anger has anything to do with *him*; that is, he denies that it reflects the way that he has carried out his side of their relationship. Her anger is presented as an unreasonable response (and an unreasonable response to his reasonable planning).²²⁰ That he offers any material assistance at all (however modest) is presented as a mark of his ethical superiority, his willingness to do the decent thing for his *philoi* in spite of Medea's irrational responses.²²¹

The implied parallel of the embassy scene, and the points of similarity and contrast with it, serve also to define the character of Medea's responding speech (465–519) which, like Achilles', combines bitter criticism of her former *philos* with an (implied) rejection of his gifts.²²² The phrasing of Medea's first sentence

²¹⁸ See *Il.* 9. 252–61, 496–7, 600–5; see further 3.3 below, text to nn. 56–61.

²¹⁹ See esp. *Il.* 9. 103–20, 259–99, 513–23.

²²⁰ See *Med.* 446–64, esp. *λόγων ματαίων* ('empty words'), 450, *μωρίας* ('folly'), 457. The opening, generalizing couplet establishes his attitude of superior detachment from the 'unmanageable evil' of 'harsh anger' (446–7). In 448 ff., the alternating patterns of 'you' and 'I' underline the dislocation between what 'you' do and what 'I' do: between 'your' irrational anger (which has nothing to do with me), and 'my' (reasonable) efforts, to counteract, or surmount this. See esp. *σοὶ* (448), *καὶ μοι* (451), *κάγω* (455), *σὺ δ'* (457), *ἤκω* ('I have come', 460), and *καὶ γὰρ εἰ σὺ* ('even if you', 463), *οὐκ ἂν δύναίμην* ('I could not', 464). On Jason's 'reasonableness', see also 548–67, discussed in text to nn. 245–7 below. On 'reasonableness' in Greek poetic discourse and its links with Greek philosophical 'reasonableness', see 3.1 below, text to nn. 15–22.

²²¹ See 459–64 and 610–15. Cf. 615 with *Il.* 9. 261: the echo of the Iliadic situation may also underline, by contrast with Agamemnon's lavish gifts, the modest scale of Jason's offer, namely, the amount required to avoid his former family being totally 'destitute' (*ἐχρήμωσιν*, 461). Jason's proposal, none the less, is presented as one of unforced generosity (459–60, 612), and seems designed to place him in a position of ethical superiority (on gift-giving as a mode of establishing one's superior status, see n. 171 above).

²²² The implied rejection is in 515, 'wander as beggars'; responding to 460–3; it is more explicit in 616–18. 'The gifts of a bad man do not confer benefit' (618) recalls

underlines that Jason has done something which Agamemnon, despite his 'shamelessness', conspicuously failed to do, to come in person to make his offer.²²³ Her expression of the thought that criticizing Jason (and thus giving him pain) will relieve her feelings marks a point of similarity with Achilles, and one that is significant for understanding her subsequent vengeance as well as her following speech.²²⁴ Medea, like Achilles, emphasizes the glaring contrast between her exceptional acts of favour to Jason and the 'negative reciprocity' involved in his 'betrayal' and remarriage.²²⁵ The Homeric parallel brings out one respect in which Medea's situation is now much worse than Achilles'. Achilles can go home to Phthia, to wealth, position, an alternative context of *philia*, and a marriage of his choosing. But, in Medea's case, her past actions (performed as 'favours' to Jason) have made enemies of those who would have been her friends, leaving open to her and the children only the option, as she sees the situation, of 'wandering as beggars'.²²⁶

The fact that Medea's speech resonates, in this way, against the background of Achilles' speech serves to underline the point that Medea's speech also embodies reflection about the living of a worthwhile human life; and that the content of her reflection has some resemblance to that of Achilles' speech. In Achilles' speech, the

Achilles' scruples about taking compensatory gifts from one who has proved himself to be an unreliable gift-giver: see 2.7 above, text to nn. 167–74.

²²³ Cf. *Il.* 9. 371–2: 'always clothed in shamelessness [*ἀναιδέϊν*]; but shameless dog that he is [*κύνες*], he would not dare to look me in the face', with *Med.* 467–72, esp. 'to do one's friends wrong and then come to face them [*ἐναντίον βλέπειν*]... is [a mark of] shamelessness (*ἀναιδέει*)'. In this and other respects, Jason's role here constitutes a fusion of that of Agamemnon and Odysseus in *Il.* 9, the wrongdoer and orator-mediator combined (on Jason's oratory, see 522–5, 576–85, and on Odysseus as an orator, see Martin (1989), 120–4).

²²⁴ For the idea that Achilles wants to communicate his sense of injustice to Agamemnon and his fellow chieftains, see esp. *Il.* 9. 369–73, 386–7, 417–26, and discussion in 2.7 above, esp. text to n. 155, and nn. 185–6. For Medea's wish to communicate with, and so give pain to, Jason, see text to nn. 274–80 below.

²²⁵ Cf. *Med.* 476–91, esp. 476, 481–2, and 488–9, with *Il.* 9. 321–36, 344–5; 'sleepless', *ἄνυστος* (*Med.* 481) might be an echo of *ἄνυστος* (*Il.* 9. 325), though the adjective is not used in connection with Medea's own contribution. The 'heroic' character of Medea's services in 476–82 reinforces the parallel. On 'negative reciprocity' see Donlan (1981–2), 162, and discussion in 2.7 above, esp. text to n. 148.

²²⁶ Contrast *Il.* 9. 356–67 and 393–400 with *Med.* 502–15; 'I, who saved you', *ἦ τ' ἔσωσά σε* (515), recalling *ἔσωσά σ'* (476), underlines Jason's failure in reciprocity. Medea's picture of her state (515) may evoke Achilles' reiterated self-description as one treated by Agamemnon like a 'dishonoured migrant (or exile)', *ἀτίμητον μετάναστην*, 9. 648, 16. 59.

content of his rejection is indicated by the character and tone of his generalizations, taken in the context of his overall argument. In Medea's case, their content is implied rather by the shaping and articulation of the themes on which she draws in her denunciation of Jason and rejection of his offer. Her speech, while passionately stated, constitutes a carefully structured ring-composition. Abuse of Jason frames an account of her past favours to Jason (and of the present disastrous consequences to her of those past favours); at the centre of the speech is placed a reminder of the children they have created, and the oath and supplication by which Jason bound himself to Medea in Colchis.²²⁷

This structure, and the phraseology used to make the points, conveys a specific idea which has more general implications. The specific idea is that the lives of Jason and Medea have been bound together by the very special circumstances of their marriage (by the acts performed on each side and by the consequences of those acts) in such a way as to render unacceptable Jason's decision to sever those connections by a unilateral decision.²²⁸ The general idea, implied in the specific one, is that human lives can become bonded together in this way. The point is not, quite, that lives bonded together can never be lived separately again. It is, rather, that lives which have become bonded (in particular, those bonded by special acts of commitment on either side) must always be lived by each partner in the awareness that they have been so bonded. This, in turn, carries the larger implication that to live a human life is to live one (of finite duration) which can become bonded in this way. There comes a point at which I can no longer say 'This is *my* life and I shall live it as I will', because it is no longer, solely, *my* life.²²⁹

²²⁷ Thus, (a) abuse of Jason, 465–74; (b) her past favours to him, including betraying her father and causing the death of Pelias, 475–87; (c) their children, i.e. the marriage has been a fertile one, 488–91; (d) Jason's betrayal of his oaths and supplication to her, 492–8; (b2) the present consequences of the past favours cited earlier (including the betrayal of her father and killing of Pelias), 499–508; (a2) abuse of Jason for placing her and the children in their present disastrous and pitiful situation, 509–19, 515 ('I who saved you', referring back to 476 ('I saved you'), see n. 226 above.

²²⁸ What is at issue is not so much the question of the circumstances under which divorce might be considered acceptable by a 5th-c. Athenian audience (on which see e.g. Lacey (1968), 108–9, Just (1989), 66–7); or whether Medea's 'marriage' to Jason was legally binding in Greece; but the questions raised by the specific (and unusual) form of this marriage and separation. See further n. 235 below.

²²⁹ For confirmation of the underlying presence of such general thoughts in the play see 1–15, 1024–36, discussed in text to nn. 249–60 below.

In Achilles' speech, we are alerted to the presence of general reflections (what I am calling 'second-order' reasoning) by his sweeping generalizations and rhetorical questions.²³⁰ The fact that Medea's speech carries a general significance emerges from the way in which the content and phrasing, juxtaposed to those of Jason's speeches, contribute to an unfolding argument, and one which is signalled from the start of the play.²³¹ In Jason's opening speech (446–64), I noted his denial (reinforced by the repeated dislocation between 'I' and 'you') that her anger constituted a legitimate response to *his* actions.²³² In effect, he denies that they have, or have had, the kind of relationship in which such anger would count as a legitimate response. Medea's speech seems designed to confront the position underlying this denial. Medea's account of their past emphasizes (in part by the interlocking of 'I' and 'you') the way in which the interconnection of their lives, especially his acceptance of her favours, makes it appropriate for her to feel anger at his failure to reciprocate those favours by his actions now.²³³ Medea's reference to their children (as well as to Jason's oaths and supplication to her) gains added point by being placed at the centre of this account. The children are the most concrete expression of the interlocking of their lives which Medea underlines; and, although the mention of them here is unemphatic, it gives the first indication of the way in which the children will figure in the thinking that leads to her revised vengeance-plan.²³⁴

²³⁰ See 2.8 above text to nn. 190–8. As suggested there, the content of his second-order reasoning cannot be treated as being identical with those generalizations but is embodied in the speech as a whole. On 'second-order' reasoning, see 2.6 above, text to nn. 125–6.

²³¹ See text to nn. 249–50 below.

²³² See text to nn. 220–1 above.

²³³ See esp. *ἔσωσά σ' ('I saved you', 476); ἀνέσχον σοι ('I held up to you', 482); δόμους προδοῦσ' ἐμοῦς ... ἰκόμην| σὺν σοί ('betraying my home ... I came with you, 483–5); πρὸς πατρός δόμους, | οὓς σοι προδοῦσα καὶ πάτραν ἀφικόμην ('to my father's house, which I betrayed for you and [in place of which] I came to your land', 502–3); σοὶ χάριν φέρουσα πολεμίου ἐχω ('conferring favours on you I have made [my philoi] into enemies', 508); με ... ἔθηκας ('you have made me'), σε | ἔχω ('I have in you', 509–11); δνειδος ... ἀλάσθαι ... ἢ τ' ἔσωσά σε ('it is a source of reproach [to you] ... that I who saved you should wander'), 514–15.*

²³⁴ The mention of the children at 489–91 (as negating, by their existence, the legitimacy of Jason's remarriage) is reinforced by their presentation as victims, together with Medea, of Jason's failure in reciprocity (513–15). The idea of infanticide is indicated in 111–18; but those lines do not prefigure the kind of motivation from which the infanticide in fact arises. On the logic of Medea's speech, esp. the linkage of oaths, children (and prospectively, at least), infanticide, see also Rickert (1987), 106–

There is a further feature which may alert us to the possibility that Medea's speech in the *agon*, together with her subsequent infanticide, carries a larger significance, expressing 'second-order' reasoning. A number of recent discussions have underlined a certain paradox in Euripides' presentation of Medea. On the one hand, especially in her opening speech to the chorus, she serves as a vehicle for expressing problems which may occur in the marriages of ordinary women. On the other, her own marriage, as this speech underlines, was highly non-standard and was one in which she played an unusually active, 'male' role.²³⁵ This latter feature fits in with the unusually assertive, quasi-legalistic way (for a woman) in which she pleads her case to the chorus, Jason, and Aegeus, and also with her adoption elsewhere of the 'heroic' stance and values in pursuing her vengeance.²³⁶ These latter features might seem to undercut Medea's claim to act as a spokesperson for the specific kind of *philia* (namely marriage) with which women are especially associated. On the other hand, it is precisely the special circumstances of Medea's marriage (with the exceptional commitment and status on her side) that give her a special claim to underline the validity of marriage.²³⁷ Also, her character as a 'heroic' woman enables her to attach to marriage and childbirth the kind of significance, as a mode of *philia*, which is typically associated elsewhere with the bonding between male chieftains.²³⁸ Also, more generally, it is characteristic of heroic figures such as Homer's Achilles and Sophocles' Ajax, that, in spite of their exceptional

13, who points out that a traditional punishment for perjury was the destruction of the perjurer's children (111–13), i.e. (here) *their* children. See also text to nn. 261–6 below.

²³⁵ For Medea as spokesperson for women, see *Med.* 214–66, esp. 230–51. The appeal to the 'greatest pledge of the right hand' (21–2) would suggest not standard Greek marriage ritual but a (male–male) handclasp, supplemented by the equal–equal reciprocity (*ἀμοιβή*), 23, by which Medea granted Jason's supplication for help in Colchis. See Flory (1978), 69–71, who also notes the use in 898 of the term *σπονδαι* ('truce', normally between states) to denote Medea's feigned agreement with Jason. See also Foley (1989), 73–8, esp. 75.

²³⁶ See text to nn. 209, 224–6 above; also Williamson (1990), 18–19.

²³⁷ I am grateful to Helene Foley for bringing out the significance of this point to me.

²³⁸ On the centrality of *philia* in *Med.* in general (including Medea's speech in the *agon*) see Schein (1990), esp. 60–1. On *philia* as a key theme in connection with problematic heroes, see 2.7–8 above, 3.4 below, esp. text to nn. 116–43, and Blundell (1989), ch. 2. On marriage as a type of *philia*, see Blundell (1989), 46; also Arist. *NE* 1162^a16–33.

kingly or near-divine status (as well as their ethically problematic acts), they serve, in my view, as the vehicle for reflection on ethical problems that apply to human beings in general.

Jason's speech (522–75) is clearly formulated to meet Medea's accusations, point for point. Principally, he denies that Medea has performed exceptional favours for him (rather, he benefited her by bringing her to Greece). He also denies that he has acted badly to his wife and children, rather, his remarriage was designed to improve the situation of all of them.²³⁹ Jason's speech is generally regarded as being speciously rhetorical and sophistical. What is of interest here is the way in which his rhetorical moves undercut, by implication, the picture of human life embodied in Medea's speech. Medea's speech emphasizes the extent to which their past actions toward each other created a bond that involved mutual responsibility and legitimated certain reactive attitudes.²⁴⁰ Jason's picture of their past life undercuts this in two principal ways. In claiming that Medea is not to be held responsible for rescuing him (responsibility is to be attributed to Aphrodite or Eros, who compelled Medea to act in this way), Jason denies, in effect, that the actions of those in love count as *actions*, in the full sense, or that they carry obligation and justify reactive attitudes.²⁴¹ His subsequent characterization of anger inspired by love as a type of 'itch' or 'chafing', that is, a wholly non-rational reaction, is in line with this denial of full psychological agency to those who act from erotic love.²⁴² Secondly, his view of Medea as benefited by being brought to Greece (by gaining access to justice and fame, 534–44) elides the point which Medea has reiterated: that she came to Greece as Jason's wife, and for no other reason.²⁴³ His redescription of their past behaviour thus negates the central theme of Medea's speech: that their lives have been interlocked by reciprocal actions of a special kind, and, more generally,

²³⁹ Thus, 534–46 answer 476–89, and 547–67 answer 509–15; also 557–8, 562–7 answer 489–91.

²⁴⁰ See text to nn. 233–4 above. In particular, she is arguing that she is right to be angry with him, the point denied by Jason in 446–64 (text to nn. 220–1 above).

²⁴¹ For the mode of argument, see E. *Trojan Women* 945–50 and Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen* 15, 19–20; see further Saïd (1978), 193–9, 252–7; and, on the question of what is and is not an *action*, in the full sense, in the late 5th c., Saïd, 214–20, and Williams (1993), ch. 3. The mode of argument is prefigured by Agamemnon's speech in *Il.* 19, 86–90 (on which see Taplin refs. in n. 179 above).

²⁴² See 555 (κνιζῆ), 568 (κνιζοί).

²⁴³ See 483–5, 492–8, 502–3; also n. 233 above.

that it is a property of human lives that they can become interlocked in this way.

Thus, Jason's description of that past life does not differ from Medea's simply in the way that it allocates praise and blame. In denying that Medea functioned as a responsible agent, and in refusing to acknowledge her actual motives in their shared actions, Jason denies her any status as a reactive partner in their relationship. To put the point differently, Jason, from his present position of detachment from Medea, arrogates to himself the right of redescribing their *philia* in terms which no *philos* could endorse as an acceptable account of her participation in the relationship.²⁴⁴ The same attitude is expressed in his subsequent defence against Medea's criticisms of his remarriage. Although Jason presents himself as having acted, in this respect, as 'a great *philos* to you and my children' (549–50), his account of his 'wise' planning on their behalf omits any reference to Medea, as a co-planner or, explicitly, as a beneficiary.²⁴⁵

At a crucial moment in his account of his intentions, he slips, significantly, from first person plural to first person singular verb forms.²⁴⁶ At the same time, strikingly, he starts to talk both about his present and projected children not as the outcome of a partnership of

²⁴⁴ Jason's redescription is not just one which Medea would not accept; it is one that no other reactively engaged agent could accept as representing her side of the relationship. On 'reactive attitudes', and the correlated conception of human (including ethical) life, see 1.3 above, esp. text to nn. 117–19.

²⁴⁵ Hence, Medea's response in 585–7 is an understandable one: 'One point will knock you down: if you were not acting badly, you should have talked me round before making this [new] marriage, not done so secretly from your *philoí* [i.e. me].' Consultation about the basis and terms of a divorce would, in Athens, normally be conducted between husband and wife's father or other responsible male relative (i.e. her *kurios*, see Just (1989), 26–7, 33); of course, no such relative is available in this case (*Med.* 257). But the fact that Jason feels that he needs to answer her criticism (albeit in his characteristically dismissive style, 588–90, cf. 446–64) indicates that, even in a Greek male-dominated society, her expectation was not wholly non-standard. The claim that one has remarried (in secret) *for the sake of* one's previous wife and children (549–67) seems abnormal by virtually any standard.

²⁴⁶ See the shift from *οἰκοῦμεν καλῶς* | *καὶ μὴ σπανιζοίμεθα* ('that we might live well and not be poor')—does this 'we' include Medea?—to *θρέψαιμι* ('that I might rear'), *ἐς ταῦτό θείην* ('that I might unite'), and, most significantly, *εὐδαιμονοίην* ('that I might prosper') in 559–65. The kind of 'prospering' or happiness envisaged is not simply that of Jason as an individual: his plans include 'benefiting' the existing children, 567, and, in any case, to have a large surviving family constitutes a normal part of 'flourishing' or 'happiness', *eudaimonia* (see e.g. Arist. *NE* 1097^b6–13, 1099^a32–1099^b6). But the *eudaimonia* is still conceived primarily as his, and that of others only in so far as they contribute to this.

philia (or as *philo*i themselves) but as components in a scheme devised by him, unilaterally, to maximize his happiness:

so that I might bring up children in a way that is worthy of my [royal] house and, by generating [*σπείρας*] brothers for the children [produced] from you, and, by uniting and binding them together in the same family, [that I might] prosper [*εὐδαιμονοῖην*]. Why do you need [more] children? For me, on the other hand, it is advantageous, by means of future children, to benefit those already living (562–7).

A certain artificiality and awkwardness in the phraseology indicates the character of his viewpoint, in which participation in the *philia* of marriage (or marriages) is conceived as the instrument of one-sided planning.²⁴⁷ Jason's concluding outburst, in which he dismisses Medea's objections to his planning as the result of her 'chafing' about the 'bed' (*λέχος*), and wishes that one could have childbirth without the mediation of women, serves, in a different way, to highlight some of the elements of reciprocity eliminated from Jason's picture of a well-planned life.²⁴⁸ In effect, he insists (in contrast to Medea's speech, as analysed earlier): 'This is *my* life and I can redesign it as I will.'

The issue embodied in the *agon* between Jason and Medea, on the nature of a proper human life, can be defined further by reference to certain other passages in the play. This also serves to specify the way in which Medea's revised vengeance-plan, involving infanticide, can be understood as an outcome of the debate. One of these passages is the famous, and syntactically striking, opening to the play. In two long, linked sentences, combining an unreal wish with an unreal apodosis, the nurse wishes for the undoing of the nexus of events which have generated the present misfortunes.²⁴⁹ The form of the sentences does not only express the nurse's wish that the past could

²⁴⁷ See esp. 563–4 and 566–7, in which existing and projected children are treated alike as components in his planning. Of course, one does not look here for modern attitudes to the husband–wife relationship; but Jason's standpoint can be juxtaposed, for instance, to Aristotle's presentation of marriage as, in principle, a mode of ethical partnership, and of children as a 'shared bond' (*sundesmos*) and 'common good' (*koinon agathon*) in this partnership, NE 1162^a25–33. On the ideal of the 'shared life' as applying to family life as well as friendship, see 5.3 below, text to n. 88; 5.4, text to nn. 114–18; 5.5, text to nn. 226.

²⁴⁸ 568–74, see also text to n. 242 above. Jason's impossible wish in 573–5 (elaborated in *Hipp.* 618–24) answers Medea's in 516–18; see also 1413–14, discussed in text to n. 281 below.

²⁴⁹ See εἴθ' ὥφελ' ('if only', 1); οὐ γὰρ ἂν ('then she wouldn't have', 6); οὐδ' ἂν ('nor would she', 9); νῦν δ' ('but as things are', 16).

be undone: it also underlines the fact that the past *cannot* be undone. The syntactical connections emphasize the causal links by which the combination of a given set of acts have intertwined the lives of Jason and Medea into a particular, and mutually related, form.²⁵⁰ The continuation of the speech presents Medea's subsequent anger, including her 'inhuman' isolation and revulsion from the children, as a direct consequence of, and intelligible response to, Jason's one-sided disruption of the interconnection of lives thus established.²⁵¹ This speech prefigures the underlying ideas about the living of a human life, as well as the accusatory attitude, of Medea's speech in the *agon*.²⁵²

The nurse's speech also underlines the presence in Medea's speech of the irreversibility of the chain of events which has been composed by their interconnected acts. Medea's acts of betrayal and wrongdoing in the past, performed as favours to Jason, and in response to Jason's oaths and supplication, have made it impossible now for her to do what any Greek divorced woman would normally do—to go home.²⁵³ Unlike Jason, who proposes, in effect, to rewrite his past life (as well as *her* past life) and to undo, or reconceive, its nexus of events and relationships, Medea cannot negate or avoid the consequences of her (or, as she sees it, *their*) past actions.²⁵⁴ Thus, Jason's speech in response, in which he expresses his radical detachment from their past shared life, takes on an added sting for Medea,

²⁵⁰ The emphasis on the importance of 'agreement' (*μη διχοστατῆ*) of wife to man (15) thus complements that on the convergence of their lives: they *have* come together (would that they had not), and it would therefore have been better if they had been able to 'preserve' their *philia* (14–16).

²⁵¹ See 16–37; also 98–118, developing 27–37.

²⁵² Note the emphasis in both parts of the play on Medea's favours to Jason, and on her coming to Greece as Jason's wife, and for no other reason (6–13, 476–87, 502–8); also on Jason's lack of reciprocity, or 'betrayal' (17–20, 488–91), and his failure to honour the trust created by the 'clasped hands', oaths, and granted supplication, 21–3, 492–8 (see also n. 235 above).

²⁵³ For this sequence of thought, see 483–508; the combination of rhetorical questions, 502–4, an ironical apodosis ('of course they'd give me a good welcome'), 504–5, and regretful acknowledgement of what she 'should have done' (*ἐχρῆν* ... *δρᾶν*, 507–8), conveys the sense of irreversibility conveyed by the syntax of 1–15. On the normal return of the divorced wife to a responsible male relative (*kurios*), see Just (1989), 26–7, 33.

²⁵⁴ See discussion of Jason's speech, esp. 559–67, in text to nn. 244–8 above; also n. 252 on Medea's presentation of Jason's role in building this chain. For criticism by others of Jason's readiness to break the ties of *philia* with his children, as well as Medea, see 74–88, developing the theme of 17–23.

representing as it does an attitude which she must find not only deeply offensive but also closed, as an option, for her.

As explained shortly, I think that Medea's revised vengeance-plan forms a continuation of their argument, and one that reflects its underlying issues. But, first, I note certain passages which also imply the underlying thought of her speech in the *agon*, namely that it is a property of human lives (lived as they are in finite life-cycles within patterns of *philia*) that they can become fundamentally, and in some ways inseparably, interlocked.²⁵⁵ A version of this thought is implied in one of Medea's first contributions to the play, a lyric outburst from a figure who is not yet seen on stage: 'Ah! I have suffered—wretched me—I have suffered things that justify great lamentation. Accursed children of a hated mother, may you die with your father and may the whole house be destroyed' (111–14). This outburst, anticipating the general form of her later vengeance (but not the specific mode in which it is taken),²⁵⁶ incorporates the idea that their children, simply because they are *their* children, are inevitably implicated in their parents' situation, in Jason's 'betrayal' and in Medea's response of destructive anger.

An elaboration of this idea occurs in the course of Medea's great monologue, as she anticipates what she will lose in being parted from her children:

I shall go into exile in another land before having the pleasure [or 'benefit'] of seeing you flourish,²⁵⁷ before [seeing] your bridal baths and brides, and laying out your marriage-beds and holding the marriage-torches . . . it was for nothing, children, that I brought you up, for nothing that I suffered and was torn with agony, bearing the sharp pains of childbirth. Once, sadly for me, I had many hopes in you, that you would look after me in my old age and wrap me up carefully with your own hands after my death, [an end to one's life] such as to make one envied among human beings [*ζηλωτὸν ἀνθρώποις*] (1024–7, 1029–35).

Medea here draws on central themes of the funeral lament. She conveys with unusual power the interlacing modes of reciprocity built into the mother-child bond over the space of a life, as well as the

²⁵⁵ See text to nn. 228–9 above.

²⁵⁶ Despite the nurse's premonitions in 91–4, 100–10, the eventual killing does not take place in an act of 'bestial' violence.

²⁵⁷ *ὀνάζθαι* *κάπιδεῖν* *εὐδαιμόνας*, 1025; contrast Jason's thought that 'benefiting' (*ὀνῆσαι*) his children (through projected ones) can contribute to his 'flourishing' (*εὐδαιμονοίην*), 565–7, see also n. 246 above.

mother's pleasure in thinking of herself as participating in those modes; she also conveys the poignancy of the premature rupture of those bonds.²⁵⁸ But, of course, the lines take on a darker, and more complex, colour from the fact that, as she puts it later, 'I shall kill them who gave them life'.²⁵⁹ This means that, as prefigured in the earlier speech (113–14), the children, simply because they are their children, have become the victims of their parents' mutual hatred. Thus, the kind of reciprocal bonding presented in the surface meaning of the lines is overlaid by another kind of bonding, in which the children's death follows as a consequence of the mother's response to the father's 'betrayal'.

A different, but perhaps not wholly unconnected, expression of such human bonding is described by the messenger a little later, in the account of how Creon shared his daughter's death. Seeing himself bereaved (*ὀρφανὸν*), when on the verge of death himself (*γέροντα τύμβον*), he cries, 'May I die with you, my child', and does so (though not as he expects), sticking to her poisoned dress, 'as ivy sticks to laurel branches' (1209–10, 1213–14). In spite of other differences, this description also conveys, with intense vividness, the way in which the parent-child bond can issue, in the unfolding of events in a life, in a shared death.²⁶⁰ This passage also expresses, in its own way, the mutual embeddedness of human lives (those, at least, interlocked by *philia*) which Medea, by implication, affirmed in the *agon* and which Jason denied.

It is this series of passages which, I think, provides the significant context for understanding the motivation for Medea's revised vengeance-plan, including the murder of their children. In the overall structure of the play, Medea's revised plan is formed, and announced, after the *agon* with Jason, and before her second

²⁵⁸ For laments which focus on the premature termination of mutually benefiting family relationships, see e.g. Hom. *Il.* 18. 54–62 (like Medea, anticipating imminent death), 24. 725–45; E. *Bacchae* 1305–24. On the ethical ideal presupposed here, see 5.3 below, text to nn. 78–83. On the Greek lament in general, see Alexiou (1974).

²⁵⁹ 1063 = 1241. Since *ἐκφύω* can signify 'beget' as well as 'give birth to', the plurals *κτενούμεν*, *ἐξεφύσαμεν* may be literal and may denote the idea that *both* parents are, in different ways, involved in 'killing' the children.

²⁶⁰ See also, within Medea's narrative of the interlocking of her life with Jason's, the (unintended) death of Pelias at the hands of his children, marked by Medea as 'the most painful way to die' (486). The juxtaposition of this intra-familial killing to Medea's reference to their children, and to Jason's failure, by his 'betrayal', to acknowledge their significance for his bond of marriage to Medea (488–91), may not be unimportant.

encounter with him. Her new plan can be understood as a response to the attitudes and thinking embodied in Jason's speech, a response that she is not able to give, effectively, within the *agon*.²⁶¹ In her response, what she disputes, by implication, is his right to detach himself from their bond of *philia*, and to remake his life (and that of the children) in the unilateral way that he proposes. She also disputes his ability to do so—at least, to do so without incurring the consequences, in the form of her reactive attitudes and correlated actions. She does so by bringing home to him, with brutal directness, that these were *his children*, and not items to be exchanged for other, projected children or to be included in a scheme for maximizing his happiness. She also seeks to bring home to him the fact that they were *their children*, the product of their shared lives (lives shared in a very special way); and that the killing of the children is his responsibility, as well as hers, in so far as it is a response to his refusal to give any real weight to this fact.²⁶² Thus, her killing of the children, as well as his wife and kingly father-in-law, is to be understood not just as a mode of terrible vengeance (though it is that) but also as an exemplary gesture, dramatizing his misguided conception—as she sees it—of what is involved in leading a human life.

Medea does not articulate her motivation quite in the terms I have offered here; nor would one expect her to do so.²⁶³ None the less, what she does say, in announcing and executing her revised revenge-plan, is consistent with such an understanding of her motivation; and in her final dialogue with Jason, this issue of thought is virtually explicit.²⁶⁴ Thus, there is a pointed contrast between her pretended compliance with Jason's plan 'of marrying the king's daughter and generating brothers for my children', and

²⁶¹ Medea, who speaks first in the *agon*, makes some localized objections to Jason's speech of self-defence (see esp. 585–7, cited in n. 245 above) and rejects his offer of material help (616–18), see n. 222 above; but her revised vengeance constitutes a more considered, and effective, response.

²⁶² For the former idea, see 559–67, discussed in text to nn. 246–7 above; for the latter idea, see 1–23, esp. 11, 17, 70–7, 488–91, also 1401–2. See also text to nn. 224–6, 230–4, 249–54 above; and text to nn. 268 and 280 below.

²⁶³ My account accentuates the way in which the infanticide is to be understood as an exemplary gesture, based on the second-order reasoning (about the nature of a human life) embodied in her speeches. Similarly, as pointed out in 2.8 above, text to nn. 187–94, Achilles does not himself articulate the fact that his rejection is to be understood as an exemplary gesture, though his rejection is plausibly understood in this way.

²⁶⁴ 1317–414, discussed in text to nn. 272–81 below.

her plan, announced shortly before, of ensuring that Jason 'will never see alive again the children born from me nor will he breed a child from his newly-yoked bride'.²⁶⁵ The contrast reflects, of course, Medea's chosen means of ensuring that 'my husband may be most deeply hurt' (817). But, against the background of the larger complex of themes I have discussed, her mode of securing this result is, necessarily, a significant one. Her 'heroic' refusal to be humiliated by Jason's plans signals her protest, like that of Achilles, against the kind of action, and the conception of a proper human life, that underlie her humiliation.²⁶⁶

It is one of the ironies of the situation that, in protesting against Jason's one-sided planning (*bouleumata*), she becomes herself the author of one-sided plans, and ones which involve her in a terrible violation of the bonds of *philia*.²⁶⁷ However, the great difference between Jason and Medea in this respect (and one that is increasingly underlined) inheres in the extent to which they are sensitive to this conflict between their respective plans and the ties of *philia*. Jason, for much of the play, is presented as prepared, without any obvious distress, to see his children go into an exile which may well be permanent.²⁶⁸ In Medea's case, by contrast, the distress at the breaking of the bonds with the children required by her plans is marked emphatically, first in the scene in which she pretends to acquiesce in Jason's plans,²⁶⁹ and then in her great monologue. In the monologue, in lines already discussed (1024–35), she expresses movingly her sense of the mother-son reciprocities that her plans

²⁶⁵ Contrast 877–8 (modelled on 563–4) with 803–5; also contrast 887–8, in which Medea says she would have 'taken pleasure in standing by your marriage-bed and attending on your bride', with her actual plans to eliminate this bride (784–9).

²⁶⁶ Thus, the 'heroic' tone of 797, 807–10 (also 1049–55, 1059–61), reflects a protest against the larger implications of Jason's 'negative reciprocity' and his denial of her right to express anger at this: see text to nn. 222–6 above.

²⁶⁷ The term *bouleumata*, together with its cognates, becomes increasingly associated with the 'plans', first of Jason, and then of Medea, which involve this violation: see 567, 772, 886, 893, 1044, 1079; see further 3.5 below, text to nn. 181, 187–8.

²⁶⁸ This is not, of course, Jason's original plan (as presented in 562–7), but it is a prospect that he is presented as accepting with equanimity (70–7), though with offers of help (459–64, 610–13, 620). In 914–21 he envisages the children, when fully grown, sharing (with their future brothers) in his prosperity in Corinth, and 'mastering my enemies'; but the means by which this result is to be achieved is wholly unspecified.

²⁶⁹ See 899–905, 922–31; her outbursts of grief are stimulated by gestures marking the (false) reconstitution of the bonds of their family, and are counterpointed to Jason's equanimity at the imminent departure of his children (see 914–21 and n. 268 above).

require her to give up. The extended conflict between this sense and her desire for what she sees as legitimate punishment for Jason's way of breaking the bonds of *philia* forms the subject of the famous monologue, to be discussed later.²⁷⁰ That Medea should see it as necessary to kill her *philo*i to assert the importance of not severing the bonds of *philia* (as Jason proposes to) is, certainly, a terrible irony, and one that serves to make her an intensely 'problematic' figure in the sense discussed earlier.²⁷¹ But Medea's own sensitivity to the pain of breaking those bonds underlines the centrality of the claims of such bonding in her motivation, and in the larger dramatic dialectic in which the expressions of her motivation have their place.

It is in the final scene that Medea's motivation for her revised vengeance, as I understand this, is most fully explicated. The scene is extraordinary in theatrical terms: Medea, seated in a divinely-given chariot above the back wall of the stage (*skene*), argues with Jason, with the dead children at her side. Its extraordinary character is sometimes explained by the idea that Medea here becomes virtually a god, an embodiment of vengeful passion (*thumos*).²⁷² But it is worth noting that Medea speaks, for the most part, as a reactively engaged human being.²⁷³ Indeed, one way of understanding the function of the scene is as a vehicle by which Medea can be enabled to give the response to Jason which she was not able to give, effectively at least, in their earlier *agon*.²⁷⁴ In this scene, Jason (by contrast with his position in the *agon*) has the role of accuser. He presents himself, in a mode characteristic of tragic denouements, as having reached, too late, a kind of understanding that eluded him before.²⁷⁵ But, although

²⁷⁰ On 1021–80, see 3.5 below. As in 897–905, it is the physical gestures associated with the bonds of *philia* that stimulate distress, and the resulting conflict, in its most acute form: see 1040–7, 1069–80.

²⁷¹ Compare the irony that Achilles lets his *philo*i die to register his protest against the way that Agamemnon has conducted himself (and proposes to conduct himself) in the mode of *philia* involved in chieftainly relationships. See e.g. *Il.* 9. 300–3, 628–32, 639–42, and see further 3.3 below, text to nn. 81–5, 90–1.

²⁷² See Knox (1979), 303–6; also, with more qualifications, Pucci (1980), 157–62.

²⁷³ The only exception is 1378–88, Medea's announcement of her plans for burying the children and establishing a ritual, and her prophecy of Jason's mode of death; see also the reference to the divine chariot (1321–2).

²⁷⁴ In a sense, her infanticide is that response; but she is now able to spell out the significance of that gesture. For an earlier expression of Medea's desire to 'relieve her feelings' by speaking to Jason and giving him pain, see 473–5; see also Achilles' desire to communicate with his fellow-chieftains, though maintaining his stance of aggrieved detachment, n. 224 above.

²⁷⁵ 'Now I have come to my senses, being mad then' (*νῦν φρονῶ, τότε οὐ φρονῶν*, 1329). For the theme, see Rutherford (1982), 147–52.

he now acknowledges, what he obscured in his previous speech, that their lives have become intertwined through their shared, and deliberate, actions, he presents Medea as wholly in the wrong, both in those earlier actions and in this present one.²⁷⁶ With the one-sidedness that he also displayed in the *agon*, he presents Medea as fundamentally different in kind, as 'a she-lion not a woman', with 'a nature more savage than the Etruscan Scylla'. He pictures himself, by contrast, as the one who is suffering, prevented even from saying goodbye to the children that 'I produced and brought up'.²⁷⁷

It is this stance of one-sided detachment that Medea principally confronts, both in her short responding speech (1351–60) and in the succeeding line-by-line dialogue (*stichomythia*). Indeed, the main impression deriving from this powerful stretch of *stichomythia* (1361–77, 1389–404), with its reiterative phrasing and mutual attacks, is of two people locked indissolubly in shared hatred and suffering.²⁷⁸ In this dialogue, Medea is not only able to fulfil the explicit objective of her revised vengeance-plan, to maximize Jason's pain (even at the cost of her own suffering).²⁷⁹ She is also able to confront—and to harry, pursue, and prevent—the attitude of one-sided detachment that underlies the action for which she takes vengeance. Jason's attempts to present her as the sole wrongdoer are parried by the reminder of 'what I suffered from you and what you did' (that is, her 'humiliation' and 'disgrace' resulting from his remarriage, 1353–5). The killing of the children, while undeniably the work of Medea's 'hand', is also presented as the result of Jason's 'sickness' (that is, his lust for a new bride), and his 'insulting violence' (*hubris*) towards Medea (1364–6). Thus, Medea can claim, intelligibly, that 'the gods know who started [*ἡρξεν*] this suffering' (1372).

The form, as well as the content, of the *stichomythia* reinforces the point that Jason, as well as Medea, is now locked for ever in the outcome of their marriage and its rupture. Medea's assertion that

²⁷⁶ See 1330–50; here, at least, he acknowledges that he married her, and brought her to Greece, to be his wife, and that she was an active partner in this process (1331, 1336–7, 1340–1); contrast 526–44, discussed in text to n. 243 above. For Medea as the (sole) wrongdoer, for whose wrongdoing he suffers the penalty, see 1331–2, 1337–8.

²⁷⁷ See 1342–3 and 1346–50, esp. 1349 (the theme of Medea killing like a beast is anticipated in 89–117).

²⁷⁸ The *stichomythia* begins, in effect, in 1361, and Medea's speech in 1378–88 forms an extended rejection of Jason's plea in 1377. For reiterative phrasing, see esp. 1363–4, 1370–1, 1372–3; with greater variety of form, 1392–3, 1394–5; and with effective use of line-break (*antilabe*), 1397–8, 1401–2, 1402–3.

²⁷⁹ Cf. 1360–2 with 817–19 (also 791–7).

'These sons are no more: this will hurt you' underlines the fact that these were *his* children, and his only ones, now that his plans for future children have been pre-empted. His expression of longing to kiss his lost children is met with a reminder of his earlier willingness to see them go into exile: 'Now you speak to them, now you embrace them; then you sent them away.'²⁸⁰ As well as bringing home to him his own active participation in the chain of events that has generated this outcome, she also spells out the way in which this outcome will affect what remains of his life, telling him not to grieve yet, but to wait for old age, when the loss of his children's care and support will really tell (1396). In effect, she is pointing out that he too will now suffer the loss of the life-long parent-child reciprocity which she anticipated in her monologue (1024-36).

Jason at no point acknowledges the validity of her claims. Indeed, his final words show the same denial of participatory responsibility and the same wish to remake his life that he showed in the *agon*: 'Would that I had never engendered sons to see them killed by you.'²⁸¹ But the expression of this impossible wish, like his other expressions of pain, grief, and outrage, all serve to mark the fact that Medea, in 'reach[ing his] heart' (1360), has also re-engaged him in the interlocking of their lives, the significance of which he denied earlier. Even if he does not accept any responsibility for her reactive judgements on this denial, he has to live out the consequences of those judgements, and, in this direct and brutal way, is implicated in them. The fact that Medea is equally implicated in them, while used as a taunt by Jason (1361-2), serves, in a way, only to reinforce the fact that their lives are thus permanently interlocked. In this appalling way, their marriage continues, and she has the last word in the argument.

It remains to relate this discussion of Medea's motivation to my larger argument. My principal aim has been to show that the approach to the question of the problematic hero outlined in 2.4, and illustrated by reference to Achilles' in *Iliad* 9, can be applied, in an illuminating way, to Euripides' Medea. My suggestion is that our sympathetic involvement with Medea (in spite of her horrific crimes) is explained best by reference to our recognition of, and engagement

²⁸⁰ 1399-1402; see text to n. 268 above.

²⁸¹ 1413-14; the play thus ends as it began, with an unfulfillable wish to undo the past: see *εἴθ' ὥφελ'* ... *μὴ* ('would that ... not', 1); *μὴ ποτ'* ... *ὀφελον* ('would that I had not'), 1413.

with, the ethical stance underlying her actions. Her killing of the children is to be understood (like Achilles' rejection of Agamemnon's gifts, with all that implies for his fellow-chieftains) as an exemplary gesture, based on reflection about the living of a human life, reflection of a kind that makes sense within the dialectic of the poem as a whole. This line of explanation seems to me to be more appropriate to the play than the type of explanation discussed in connection with Butcher (and Nietzsche), in which our response is explained as that of identification with a subjectively realized (and powerful) personality, the effect of which is to negate normal moral judgements.²⁸² I think that much of the special quality of Euripides' presentation of her motives for infanticide (by contrast with Seneca's, for instance),²⁸³ lies in the way in which we are encouraged to see the ethical force of her grounds for acting as she does while sharing her repugnance for the act, and the consequences, of infanticide.

In the case of Medea, unlike Achilles, I have not framed this discussion as a debate with critical discussions which are informed by 'subjective-individualist' conceptions of personality, or by late Romantic ideas of heroism which embody such conceptions. This is partly because I do not think that there are critical discussions of Medea's motivation along these lines which are as influential as the discussions of Achilles by Whitman and Parry considered earlier.²⁸⁴ Also, I have taken the view that my approach can be illustrated better at this stage simply by presenting it, in a positive way, in connection with a prominent, and revealing, instance of a 'problematic hero' in Greek tragedy. But the point should not be missed that my discussion of Medea forms part of my exploration of an 'objective-participant' conception of personality; and in a subsequent discussion of Medea I draw out this point with explicit reference to modern scholarly treatments.²⁸⁵

One further clarification is needed here. I have suggested that

²⁸² See 2.3 above, esp. text to nn. 42-8. In my view, Medea's motivation is based on an (exceptional) understanding of the ethical claims of *philia* and not on a stance of self-realizing individualism. See also text to nn. 286-9 below on Jason.

²⁸³ On the contrast between Euripides and Seneca in this respect, see Gill (1987). See also 3.5 below on *Med.* 1021-80.

²⁸⁴ Knox (1979), ch. 21, esp. 306-16, moves further towards analysing *Med.* in terms of the ethical issues raised, e.g. gender-related ones, than does Knox (1964), on which see 2.8 above, text to nn. 204-6. See Knox (1979), 306-16; this approach is taken further by e.g. Foley (1989), 73-83.

²⁸⁵ See discussion of Snell (1964) in 3.5 below.

Jason's speeches (especially in the *agon*) embody the assumption that he has the right, and ability, to live his life as being *his* life, without regard to the way in which this life has become intertwined through *philia* with those of others.²⁸⁶ It might seem that, in doing so, I am ascribing to Jason the kind of stance, that of the ethical outsider, which is, on my general view, alien to the thought-world of Greek poetry. However, this is not the case. In claiming that Jason thinks he has the right to live his life as *his* life, I have not also suggested that he understands that right in the way that expresses a subjective-individualist conception of the person. There is no reference in his speeches to ideas such as that, in divorcing Medea, he is seeking to 'realize himself' or ('his true self'), or that his divorce is to be taken as an expression of a type of absolute or 'transcendental' freedom. Also wholly absent from his speeches is any indication that his act reflects a unique, 'first-personal' view of the situation and of his claims in this situation. Ideas of this general type are familiar to us from (among other sources) Romantic and post-Romantic literature and film; and in this way they have informed, as I pointed out, certain scholarly interpretations of Homer's Achilles.²⁸⁷ But, when Jason seeks to justify his actions, as he does in 521-75, he does not do so in those terms. He appeals to ethical values of the same general type as Medea does, that is, to the ethics of mutual benefit or reciprocity and to the value of benefiting one's *philoï* by sensible planning.²⁸⁸ His 'one-sidedness' emerges in the way that he interprets those values; in particular, it emerges in the way he denies any status to Medea as a reactive participant or fellow-agent in the living of a life by those values.²⁸⁹ The argument between them is, thus, an argument about what it means to live by those values, and, in particular, how much weight is to be given to the way and extent to which one's life has become interlocked with that of others. It is not an argument between a self-proclaimed individualist and a defender of the claims of family life. Thus, although Jason's position can be analysed appropriately in terms of the right to live one's life as one will, it does not present the same version of that position that we find in a subjective-individualist framework of thinking.

²⁸⁶ See text to nn. 246-8.

²⁸⁷ See above 2.3, text to nn. 42-8; 2.5, text to nn. 99-109. On whether 'self-realization', in any sense, is relevant to Greek philosophical ethics, see Ch. 5 below, esp. 5.2, 5.5-6.

²⁸⁸ See esp. *Med.* 526, 534-5, 549-50, 566-7, and text to nn. 244-5 above.

²⁸⁹ See text to nn. 240-4 above.

3

The Divided Self in Greek Poetry

3.1 PRELIMINARIES

In this chapter, I consider the question of the model of personality which is displayed in a number of notable passages of self-division in Homer and Greek tragedy.¹ As elsewhere, my claim is that these passages are best interpreted in the light of the objective-participant conception of personality rather than the subjective or individualist conceptions sometimes used to interpret them. I want especially to explore links between the kind of objective (non-subject-centred) psychological model and the kind of participant ethical model that we find in Greek poetry. I do so partly by examining the connections between three of the ideas associated with this conception, and with the image of the self in dialogue which symbolizes this. These ideas, in outline, are: (1) that human psychological life centres on the interplay or 'dialogue' between parts or functions; (2) that ethical life is shaped and expressed by participation in interpersonal and communal dialogue; (3) that reflective or dialectical debate constitutes the means by which human beings can properly determine the basis of this shared ethical life.² I begin by reviewing the way in which this book has so far illustrated these ideas (as they figure in Greek thinking), and then explain how the analysis of the poetic examples of self-division fits into the exploration of this conception of personality.

In 1.2, I have argued that the Iliadic deliberative monologues can be taken as expressing a certain picture of human motivation, one also expressed in Aristotelian and Stoic theory. This is the picture of the developed human being as someone whose motivation involves certain kinds of reasoning (principally, conceptualization and inference), and is based on certain kinds of reasons (beliefs about

¹ The main passages are Hom. *Od.* 20. 18-21 (3.2 below); *Il.* 9. 645-8 (3.3 below); S. *Ajax* (Ai.) 646-92 (3.4 below); E. *Med.* 1021-80 (3.5 below).

² See *Introd.*, text to nn. 39-45.

desirable goals or principles of behaviour).³ I have suggested that recent work in the philosophy of mind helps to make this picture of human motivation more intelligible, and also explains why such motivating processes need not be conscious to the agent, even though special circumstances might render them conscious. This picture of human motivation is an alternative (and, arguably, a preferable) one to that presupposed by Snell and Adkins, in which human actions are based on self-conscious acts of will. Thus, we can accept the claims of these scholars that Homeric (and Greek philosophical) patterns of thinking do not express this latter idea, without being forced to adopt their conclusion that the Greek patterns are, therefore, primitive or defective in this respect.

In 1.3–4, I have made the related claim that the patterns of ethical motivation displayed in the Iliadic monologues can also be understood as analogous to those expressed in Aristotelian and Stoic theories, and that recent developments in ethical thinking make this connection more intelligible. I have argued that the ethical motivation involved can be understood as an expression of engagement with the agent's communal role and with the beliefs and principles associated with this role. Sometimes, the ethical reasoning also involves reference to the agent's thinking about his life as a whole, a life understood, typically, as bound up with his engagement with communal and interpersonal roles and the associated nexus of beliefs and practices.⁴ In effect, my suggestion is that the kind of reasons and reasoning taken to motivate his actions cannot be analysed adequately without reference to his engagement with this nexus.⁵ This way of interpreting ethical motivation is designed, again, as an alternative to that presupposed by Snell and Adkins, according to which ethical—or rather *moral*—motivation depends on the individual agent's self-subordination to universal principles, a conception of moral motivation based on Kant.⁶

In Chapter 2, the discussion of the 'problematic heroes' of Greek epic and tragedy (as exemplified in Achilles and Medea) is designed

³ See 1.2 above, esp. text to nn. 70–6.

⁴ See 1.3 above, esp. text to nn. 110–26.

⁵ The agent's 'reasons', that is to say, are not just *his* (unique) reasons, and cannot be analysed properly in a psychological framework that treats the individual agent as an atomic unit of motivation: see Baier (1985), criticizing Davidson's mode of analysis; also C. Taylor (1985), 258–63.

⁶ See above 1.1, text to nn. 27–34; and, on the significance of the 'ethical-moral' distinction, Introd., n. 23.

to add depth and complexity to this picture of ethical motivation, and to the conception of the person implied in this picture. The fact that ethical motivation in Greek epic and tragedy is to be understood in terms of engagement with a communal role and a nexus of shared beliefs does not mean that there is no scope for ethical disagreement, of a profound kind, between different individuals, or between one individual and the others with whom she is socially bonded. What it does mean, I have argued, is that the disagreement is understood as being about the implications of their shared ethical beliefs. It is not a question of one individual, Achilles, for instance, using a set of principles which are private to himself, to determine his actions, or to criticize the principles of his group. Rather it is a question of the individual stating (or dramatizing) the point that their shared principles legitimate a mode of response which is not obviously so legitimated, and which might otherwise seem at odds with those principles. The claim that these shared principles legitimate the stance chosen rests on (explicit or implied) reflective or second-order reasoning: that is, reasoning *about* the principles used to guide action as distinct from (first-order) deliberative reasoning from ethical principles to specific actions.⁷ Although more complex than first-order reasoning, this type of reflective reasoning is still to be understood as based on the shared principles of the individual's group. As exemplified by Achilles and Medea, it constitutes reflective reasoning about what those principles imply, and not a critique of those principles made from outside the framework of those principles.⁸

The question of how to analyse the passages of self-division which form the subject-matter of this chapter is also one which depends on the conception of 'self' which is presupposed, and on the kinds of unity and disunity that form part of this conception. For instance, Snell thinks that Homeric thinking has not developed a sufficiently unified conception of the self (Snell presupposes a post-Cartesian model of the self) to allow for the possibility of self-division (that is, division *within the self*). In Medea's great monologue, especially its concluding lines (E. Med. 1078–80), Snell believes that we can find evidence of the emergence of the idea of a self-conscious person

⁷ On this distinction, see 2.5 above, text to nn. 125–6.

⁸ For the contrasting view that the heroic stance reflects the search for a purely individualistic ethic, see 2.5 above, text to nn. 98–109. On the relationship between Greek poetic and philosophical thinking about second-order reasoning, and on the more ambitious role given to this in Greek philosophy, see 4.7 below, text to nn. 290–3.

(that is, one who is conscious of her psychological states *as hers*). This idea is expressed, rather paradoxically, in the consciousness that her psychological state is *dis*united; more precisely, that her reason is in conflict with her passion. This particular way of analysing the conflict expressed in *Med.* 1078–80 reflects not so much Snell's Cartesian assumptions, but rather the Kantian psycho-ethical model, in which (rational) will, the locus of *moral* agency, is distinguished sharply from desires, impulses, and 'passions'.⁹ In a more generalized way, the Kantian type of conception of the will seems to underlie one prevalent modern way of analysing psycho-ethical conflict, namely as 'weakness of will': that is, as the failure of (rational, moral) will to exert its 'strength' over emotions and desires.¹⁰ This mode of analysis is to be found in some recent interpretations of Achilles' psycho-ethical conflict in *Il.* 9. 645–8. I suggest that it is a form of interpretation which is at odds both with the specific form of the conflict displayed in those lines and with the model of personality embodied there.¹¹

The model of personality that we find expressed in Greek poetry and philosophy, as I have argued in Chapter 1, is not centred on the idea of the Cartesian 'I', the locus of self-consciousness and volition, or on that of the Kantian (autonomous) rational will. So we should not expect psycho-ethical unity or disunity to be expressed in terms which are correlated with these ideas. Rather, such unity and disunity needs to be linked with the three aspects of the objective-participant conception outlined earlier (text to n. 2 above). As noted in Chapter 1, in Homeric and Greek philosophical thought, developed human beings are seen as, characteristically, psychologically unified in so far as their emotions and desires are closely interrelated with their beliefs and reasoning. For instance, in Aristotelian and Stoic accounts of human action, motivation to action is analysed in terms of 'deliberate desire', or of 'impulse', based on conceptualization and inference; and those forms of analysis can be

⁹ See 3.5 below, text to nn. 150–1; and, on the relevant feature of Kant's theory, see 4.2 below, text to nn. 9–12. On Snell's synthesis of Cartesian and Kantian thinking, see 1.1 above, text to nn. 16–33.

¹⁰ Gosling (1990) brings out the Christian background to this conception of weakness of will (ch. 6), by contrast with the analysis of conflict by reference to competing beliefs and reasoning found in Greek theory and in some modern theories, such as Davidson's (Gosling, chs. 1–5, 8). Dihle (1982) underlines this contrast between Greek and Christian thinking as regards weakness of will and wrongdoing, 31–6, 41–2, 84–7, 127–9.

¹¹ See 3.3 below, text to nn. 68–85.

paralleled in the Homeric deliberative monologues.¹² Relatedly, psychological division is explained, typically, in Greek philosophy by reference to the tension between two beliefs (or rather, two sets of belief-*cum*-reasoning) and the emotions and desires correlated with these beliefs, rather than to the conflict between rational will and (non-rational) passion. (Thus, *akrasia*, a term used by Aristotle to denote a specific type of psychological conflict, should not be taken to signify 'weakness of will' in the sense identified earlier, though it is often translated in this way.)¹³ I suggest later that this way of conceiving conflict within the self can also be paralleled in Greek epic and tragedy; and that Homeric vocabulary, for instance, embodies the assumption that emotions and desires reflect beliefs and reasoning, both in the case of unified and divided psychological states.¹⁴

However, to explore Greek thinking more fully, we need to take into account the relationship between the first and the second aspects of the objective-participant conception of the person: that is, between intra-psychic interplay and socio-ethical engagement. One feature of Homeric and tragic vocabulary that is often noted is the drawing of a contrast between 'I' (or 'he/she') and a psychological part or force. This feature is sometimes taken to indicate a higher level of awareness of psychological unity than Snell, for instance, thought was present in Homeric psychology.¹⁵ However, to make the best sense of this feature of Homeric vocabulary, we need to situate it in its context, and to see how such usages are connected with personal interchange. As I illustrate later (3.3 below), the drawing of a contrast between 'I' and a psychological 'part' or function, together with the use of psychologically active or passive vocabulary, is linked with the stance taken up in interpersonal exchange, and expresses a correlated attitude regarding one's own, or another's, actions and feelings. Broadly speaking, the principal determinant of what 'I' am and am not, and of how far 'I' (or 'you') can or cannot control an emotion or my 'spirit' (*thumos*), is what is presented as 'reasonable' within personal interchange.¹⁶

¹² See 1.2 above, text to nn. 70–97.

¹³ On the relevant sense of 'weakness of will', see text to n. 10 above; on Aristotelian and other Greek analyses of psychological conflict, see 3.6 below, esp. text to nn. 219–33.

¹⁴ See 3.3 below, text to nn. 74–80.

¹⁵ See 3.3 below, text to n. 53.

¹⁶ See 3.3 below, text to nn. 55, 60, 67–8. The term 'reason' (and 'reasonable/rational') in English, like *logos* (and *logikos*) in Greek, can signify either a norm or a

This feature of Homeric (and tragic) psychological vocabulary can be connected, again, with certain well-marked aspects of Greek philosophical thinking. The idea that the emotional or desiring part of the personality is, in human beings, amenable to the control of reason is sometimes linked with the idea that human behaviour and attitudes are, characteristically, amenable to being shaped by social persuasion in the form of praise and blame.¹⁷ Correspondingly, ethical education (at least in its earlier phases) is seen, especially by Plato and Aristotle, as the shaping of patterns of belief-based emotions and desires (dispositions) by interpersonal and communal interchange.¹⁸ This process can also be characterized as the development of patterns of action, emotion, and desire which are 'reason-ruled', 'as reason directs', or 'according to right reason'.¹⁹ In ways examined later in this book, 'reason' in Greek philosophical thinking signifies both a type of psychological function and a psycho-ethical norm.²⁰ Also, 'reason' (in this complex sense) is taken to be, ideally at least, the key element in the personality, or 'what each of us is'.²¹ The analysis of the parts of the psyche, and of the extent to which these parts form a cohesive unity or whole, is closely linked with the question of what constitutes a 'reasonable' or 'reason-ruled' pattern of behaviour and attitude.²²

These various features of Greek philosophical thinking require, obviously, further explication if we are to make proper sense of their significance for this enquiry. My point here is that we can find in Greek philosophy the expression of a view about the linkage between psychological description (including self-description) and socio-ethical interchange which is similar to that implied in the features of Greek poetic vocabulary just noted. There are philosophical analogues, of the poetic usage in which statements about who 'I' am, and whether 'I' am or am not subject to a psychological

function. I normally use 'reasonable/unreasonable' to identify the specifically normative sense and 'rational/non-rational' to identify the purely functional senses. See also *Intro.*, n. 58, and n. 20 below.

¹⁷ See e.g. Arist. *NE* 1. 13, esp. 1102^b16–1103^a1; *LS* 20B, esp. (1)–(2), and 20C, esp. (2); also Pl. *Protagoras* (*Pri.*) 322a–d, 324a–c, 352c–326e.

¹⁸ See below 4.2, text to nn. 15–31, 45–7, 54–63; 4.4, text to nn. 92–119.

¹⁹ These formulations are Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic, respectively: see e.g. Pl. *R.* 441e, 442c, Arist. *NE* 1125^b35, *LS* 65J. See further below 3.6, text to nn. 199–201; 4.2, text to nn. 15–31, 57–65.

²⁰ See below 4.2, text to nn. 37; 4.6, text to n. 209–13.

²¹ See 5.5–6 below, together with refs. in n. 20 above.

²² See further below 4.2, 4.4, 4.6; 5.5–6.

part or force, are determined by judgements about what constitutes 'reasonable' behaviour. In terms of the model of personality being applied here, these features indicate the interconnections between the first two aspects of the objective-participant conception of personality, as expressed in Greek poetic and philosophical thinking.

However, to analyse fully the kind of psycho-ethical conflict that is present in three of the poetic examples discussed here, we need also to refer to a third aspect of this conception, that relating to the role of second-order reasoning or reflective debate. What is clear, in the *Iliad*, *Ajax*, and *Medea*, is that there is room for argument about what, precisely, *does* constitute a 'reasonable' action, feeling, and attitude. On the view presented in the preceding chapter, what is characteristic of the problematic heroes of Greek poetry is that their non-standard (and apparently 'unreasonable') actions and attitudes are motivated by reflective reasoning about the proper goals of a human life. The analysis of the examples of psycho-ethical conflict offered here constitutes an extension of that type of interpretation. The conflict arises, principally, from the tension between conventional norms of what is 'reasonable' (whose validity the heroes themselves acknowledge, at least to some extent) and the contrasting ethical stance (or exemplary gesture) which arises from reflective reasoning.

This is an ethical conflict, and one which centres, as I have argued, on the question of what constitutes proper shared human norms (it is not a conflict between shared and individualistic norms). But it is a conflict which is also expressed in psychological (or at least psycho-ethical) description and self-description. It is this conflict, I suggest, which provides the explanatory framework for Achilles' characterization of his 'swelling' anger (*Il.* 9. 646–8, and for Medea's presentation of herself as 'mastered' by spirit (*thumos*, *Med.* 1079–80). The conflict displayed in such lines reflects the hero's own recognition of the competing grounds for describing a given act or attitude as 'reasonable' or not, and, thus, as the kind of act or attitude which one should or should not identify with 'oneself'.²³

I suggested earlier that Snell analyses Medea's self-description in the light of a pattern (the conflict between rational will and passion) that is psychologically and ethically inappropriate; and the point just

²³ See below 3.3, text to nn. 81–5; 3.5, text to nn. 156–63; in these cases, as in *S. Ai.* (see 3.4, text to nn. 128–43), the hero reaffirms, in one way or another, the exemplary gesture based on reflective reasoning.

made may help to clarify my reason for holding this view. The stance which Medea associates with 'spirit' is one that is expressed in an exemplary gesture (that of infanticide) based on reflective reasoning; as such, it is not properly characterized as merely a non-rational, and unreasonable, 'passion'. Medea's lines have also been interpreted in terms of Greek philosophical analyses of psychological conflict, such as that of *akrasia*. This latter type of analysis is, on the face of it, more promising, in that (as I have just suggested) it refers to a broadly similar pattern of psycho-ethical thinking.²⁴ However, it is open to question whether the Greek philosophers' analyses of psychological conflict fasten on precisely the same type of conflict that we find here. There are, in fact, two questions involved. One is whether there is any equivalent in Greek philosophy for the kind of psycho-ethical conflict just identified in Greek poetry (that is, between the outcome of ethical reflection and the recognition of conventional ethical claims). The second is whether the equivalent (if there is one) falls within the philosophers' analyses of psycho-ethical conflict, such as Aristotle's treatment of *akrasia*. A further question is whether, if such a philosophical equivalent exists, the philosophers themselves recognize the similarity. These questions take us to the heart of some key issues in Greek theoretical ethical psychology and its relation to the poetic tradition, and do so in a way that tells us a good deal about the conception of personality involved. I broach these questions at the close of this chapter (3.6), and pursue their implications in subsequent chapters.

I make one further general point; this relates to the form of the passages discussed here. These passages include examples of inner dialogue: Odysseus' self-address in *Od.* 20. 18–21 (3.2), and Medea's great monologue (*Med.* 1021–80, 3.5), and also the quasi-monologue or 'deception-speech' in Sophocles' *Ajax* (646–92, 3.4). They also include a passage (Achilles' words in *Il.* 9. 645–8, 3.3) which, while not couched as inner dialogue, is similar in the kind of psycho-ethical conflict which it exhibits. The point made in connection with the Homeric deliberative monologues can also be made here. Such passages are not chosen for consideration because the form involved (largely inner dialogue or monologue), as well as the content of the passages, is taken to be significant as evidence of a growing awareness of 'innerness' or self-consciousness, on the

²⁴ See text to nn. 12–14 above; and 3.6 below, text to nn. 193–218.

assumption that the history of the conceptions of personality will necessarily consist in this kind of development. Rather, the form, as well as the ethical content, of the passages is interpreted in the light of the role of the types of dialogue associated with the objective-participant conception of person.²⁵

For instance, the occurrence of self-address in *Odyssey* 20 and *Medea*, and of quasi-soliloquy in *Ajax*, like the Iliadic deliberative monologues, reflects the fact that the person involved is isolated by his special situation, and speaks to himself because the normal modes of interpersonal dialogue are not available. Also, I emphasize the extent to which the 'monologue' of Medea, as well as the quasi-soliloquy of Ajax, constitutes, in part at least, an interpersonal dialogue.²⁶ Relatedly, the psychological conflict expressed in these monologues, and in the other cases discussed, stems from a crisis in interpersonal or communal relationships. The two sides, or voices, in this conflict can be seen as expressing ethical judgements about the appropriate way to act and feel in a situation of this type. More specifically, in three of the cases, the two voices represent the expression of standard ethical claims in interpersonal relationships, on the one hand, and the outcome of reflective debate on the basis of such claims, on the other. In these respects, these actual or quasi-monologues constitute a mode of articulating ideas which stem from (and could be expressed appropriately within) an interpersonal relationship, were it not for the figure's exceptional isolation. Thus, the innerness of the form is interpreted here as the (exceptional) internalization of the modes of dialogue involved (namely interpersonal exchange and reflective debate), rather than as the emergence of an understanding of the person as a fundamentally inner (self-conscious, first-personal) entity.

3.2 ODYSSEUS' BARKING HEART

I begin with a relatively straightforward example of internal dialogue, taken from the start of *Odyssey* 20. The Homeric passage is a striking one and has attracted the attention of those interested

²⁵ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 58–61, 101–4. The developmental view referred to is that of Snell (1.1 above, text to nn. 20–3). On the types of dialogue associated with the image of 'the self in dialogue', see *Introd.*, text to nn. 39–45.

²⁶ See below 3.4, text to nn. 124–30; 3.5, text to n. 153. For a contrast between the form of monologue in *E. Med.* 1021–80 and the more thoroughly internalized (but otherwise analogous) monologue in *Sen. Med.* 893–977, see Gill (1987).

(from Plato onwards) in Homeric psychological patterns.²⁷ Odysseus is lying awake at night, 'planning bad things' for the suitors (5) when he hears some of his serving-women (who have been sleeping regularly with the suitors) laugh as they go to join their lovers. At this, his 'spirit' (*thumos*) is aroused by the wish to kill them; but he restrains this wish and makes himself put up with the serving-women's behaviour until he has achieved his main aim of punishing the suitors. However, he is still very anxious about how he, virtually alone, is to kill so many suitors, and lies awake, tossing and turning until Athena appears to assure him of her help, and puts him to sleep. The passage is marked by a number of features which are unusual in Homeric phraseology. It is unusual in deploying in one context all three of the formulaic modes of Homeric deliberation.²⁸ These are combined, here alone, with two colourful similes, which do not occur elsewhere in Homer. Odysseus' heart, angered by the serving-women's behaviour, is compared to a dog, standing protectively over her pups and barking at a stranger (13–16). Odysseus' body, tossing and turning anxiously, is compared to a sausage (or haggis) being turned over as it is cooked on a hot fire (24–7). The phrasing of the self-address, and of the response, involves more 'personalizing' of the part addressed (the heart) than we find elsewhere in Homer.²⁹ The part is also treated as a whole person with a life over time, in so far as it is reminded of past behaviour and urged to match this behaviour now: 'Bear it, my heart: once you bore something still more outrageous than this, on the day when the Cyclops of overwhelming power ate my strong companions; but you put up with that until cunning brought you out of the cave, although you expected to die' (18–21). In effect, the heart becomes a partial sub-

²⁷ *Od.* 20. 18–21 is referred to in *Pl. Phd.* 94d6–e1, R. 390d4–5 and 441b4–c2 (in the last case, the Homeric passage is used to support the Platonic picture of the relationship between 'reason' and 'spirit'). For later Greek philosophical references to the passage, see Gill (1983a), 137; see further, on Platonic responses to the poetic tradition, 3.6, text to nn. 240–3; 4.7, text to nn. 293–316.

²⁸ These modes are: (1) 'he wondered [*μερμηρίζε*] whether to . . . or to' (20. 10–12); (2) 'he wondered how to' (28–30); and (3) self-address, as in the *Iliadic* deliberative monologues. This is also the only Homeric passage in which a god intervenes to resolve the second type of deliberation ('wondering how to . . .'). See Voigt (1934), 72–3; Russo (1968), 292–3.

²⁹ Thus, it is only here that the phrases 'he rebuked' (*ἠτίπαπε*) and 'soothing' (*καθαπτόμενος*), are used with reference to a psychological part instead of a person in Homer (20. 17, 22). Also, the expression 'his heart remained, enduring stubbornly' (23–4) is unique in Homer (with partial parallels in *Il.* 19. 220, 23. 591), as also is the phrase *ἐν πείῳ*, 'in obedience' or 'in bondage'.

stitute for 'much-enduring' Odysseus himself; it is treated as capable of 'bearing' short-term pain and outrage, though 'expecting' to die, until cunning or ingenuity (another Odyssean characteristic) brings relief.³⁰

In any mode of interpretation, these special features of the passage require explanation. Christian Voigt's intellectual position, in his study of Homeric deliberation (1934) is virtually identical to that of Snell, in his studies in the same period (1928 and 1930). Like Snell, Voigt denies that we can find genuine 'personal' decisions in Homer and does so on similar post-Cartesian and post-Hegelian grounds.³¹ However, the unusual features of the passage from *Odyssey* 20 lead Voigt to see some indications of heightened 'inner-ness' (*Verinnerlichung*), and fuller 'psychologizing' (*Psychologisierung*) than we find in the deliberative processes in the *Iliad* (p. 73). These features are taken to show that Homer has reached the historico-cultural level at which man is conscious of the need to make decisions, but not yet conscious of himself as an autonomously deciding 'I'. The passage is taken to display a consciousness of psychological pressures and 'helplessness' (*amechania*) in the form of the barking heart, the tossing body, and the supportive goddess, but not yet the cohesive 'I', conscious of making decisions that are fully 'its own'.³²

Snell, similarly, sees the passage as marking the beginning—but only the very beginning—of the development towards awareness of genuinely inner conflict which he sees as forming a crucial part of the growth of self-consciousness. The passage expresses awareness of the kind of emotional impulse which, if unrestrained, can lead to disaster (characterized here as the barking heart). But there is said to be virtually no awareness of the countervailing element of rationality,³³ which is the least that would be needed to show an awareness of inner conflict. What would also be needed, in Snell's view, are indications that the conflict takes place *within the self* (not between the person and an opposing force, such as 'heart' or *thumos*), and

³⁰ For the incident referred to, see *Od.* 9. 287 ff., esp. 299–306 and 316–18.

³¹ See Voigt (1934), 102–7, including the Hegel ref. on 105; 1.1 above, text to nn. 5–12, nn. 31–3. Cf. Voigt, 87–92 (on *Il.* 11. 404–10) with Snell (1960), 159, discussed in 1.3 above, text to nn. 130–6. In 82–6, Voigt adds a point not made by Snell: in Homer, the gods also fail to make genuinely autonomous decisions.

³² See Voigt (1934), 70–1, and 73–4. The historico-cultural level reached is the same as that found in lyric; see also Snell, refs. in 1.1 above, text to nn. 21–3.

³³ Snell (1964), 53: 'the element of reason appears only in its negative function as a hindrance and prevention of disaster'.

also that the conflict between reason and impulse be understood as a genuinely moral one.³⁴ In the absence of these features, the passage is taken as giving only the most rudimentary picture of what 'inner' conflict involves.

In framing an alternative line of interpretation of the passage to that exemplified by Voigt and Snell, it is useful to refer again to contemporary non-Cartesian theories of mind, which do not presuppose the picture of the person as a unified, self-conscious 'I', as Voigt and Snell do.³⁵ Especially suggestive is a discussion by Daniel Dennett, in which he reformulates in functionalist terms the definition of the person offered by Harry Frankfurt (1971), namely that of someone who acts not just on desires but on desires *about* desires ('second-order' desires).³⁶ As I suggest later, Frankfurt's theory provides a contemporary version of the post-Cartesian and post-Kantian picture of the person as a locus of self-consciousness and will.³⁷ But Dennett's reformulation of his theory offers a picture of human psychology which is much more cognate to the picture of the person implied in the Homeric passage.

Acting on a second-order desire, doing something to bring it about that one acquires a first-order desire, is acting upon oneself just as one would act upon another person: one *schools* oneself, one offers oneself persuasions, arguments, threats, bribes, in the hopes of inducing oneself to acquire the first-order desire. (193, his italics)

Dennett's objective here is to provide a non-Cartesian analysis of the kind of self-reflexive capacities which Frankfurt takes as criterial of personhood. He analyses self-reflexiveness not as an expression of self-consciousness (on the assumption that self-consciousness is a basic datum of our existence as persons), but rather as the internalization of social practices of mutual persuasion.³⁸ This form of analysis has, of course, general implications for the understanding of

³⁴ For the first point, see also Voigt (1934), 70 n. 2; and Böhme (1929), 66–8. On the second point, reflecting Snell's post-Kantian standpoint, see Snell (1964), 52–6; 1.1 above, text to nn. 31–2; and 3.5 below, text to nn. 149–51.

³⁵ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 38–53, on functionalism and action-theory.

³⁶ Dennett (1976), 192–3.

³⁷ See 6.3 below, text to nn. 60–6.

³⁸ Dennett does not deny that this kind of self-persuasion *does* involve self-consciousness ('episodes of conscious thought, in a dialogue with oneself', p. 193). But his point is that self-consciousness is an intermittent phenomenon, a product of certain special situations, and not a permanent accompaniment of psychological life, as in the Cartesian model. See further Gill (1991), 173–4.

human psychology. But it has a special interest in connection with Homeric (and other Greek) models, in which inner dialogue is plausibly understood as a secondary development of interpersonal discourse.³⁹ As noted earlier, Homeric inner dialogues occur at moments of exceptional isolation, in which the figure is unable to engage in the kind of interpersonal exchange that is the normal mode of Homeric deliberation, and is thus driven to talk to himself, in the absence of any other partner.⁴⁰

This point applies to all Homeric formulations of deliberation as self-address. But it has a special relevance to the passage in *Odyssey* 20, in which, as noted earlier, the 'part' addressed (the heart) is treated more as a person, and as a (partial) substitute for Odysseus himself, than in the standard Homeric presentation of self-address as dialogue with the *thumos*.⁴¹ Dennett's characterization of self-reflexiveness as 'acting upon oneself just as one would act upon another person' (p. 193) serves to underline the character of the Homeric formulation of self-address. Odysseus' speech internalizes a version of the type of appeal which standardly forms part of Homeric interpersonal discourse: the appeal to suppress indignation in the short term, in order to achieve a desirable longer term goal.⁴² Also, the striking move made in *Od.* 20 of appealing to the heart by persuasive self-characterization is paralleled by the use of persuasive characterization of the addressee and his acts in the appeals made to Achilles in the *Iliad*.⁴³ Odysseus' aim is, in Dennett's terms, to 'school' himself to respond in a certain way in this situation; and, in doing so, he applies to his heart modes of 'schooling' which are based on Homeric patterns of interpersonal dialogue.

However, to take this line of interpretation further, we need to incorporate another non-Cartesian mode of analysing human psychology, that is, in terms of 'self-identification' and 'self-distancing'. The contemporary familiarity of this mode of interpretation is a product of its role in psychoanalytic theory. The idea

³⁹ For similar use of Dennett's theory, see 1.4 above, text to nn. 190, 193–5. See also refs. in n. 40 below, and below 3.6, text to n. 233; 4.2, text to nn. 39–44.

⁴⁰ See text to n. 26 above and 1.2 above, text to nn. 101–4; see further Claus (1981), 39–41; Russo and Simon (1968), 498.

⁴¹ See text to nn. 29–30 above. In the standard form (see text to n. 45 below), the figure simply addresses his *thumos* and subsequently rejects what it says to him.

⁴² See 3.3 below, esp. text to nn. 57–63.

⁴³ See *Il.* 9. 553–5, 595, 598 (Phoenix's characterization of Meleager as a cautionary parallel to Achilles' present stance); 628–30, 636–8, Ajax's persuasive (negative) characterization of Achilles; see further 3.3 below, text to nn. 62–7.

that there are aspects of one's personality (motivating beliefs and desires) which one may or may not acknowledge as one's 'self' is central to Freud's theory, and to his (partly) anti-Cartesian project.⁴⁴ This form of analysis has helped to shape readings of Greek poetic psychology since, at least, E. R. Dodds's celebrated interpretation of *ate* ('delusion') in terms of self-distancing. More recently, R. W. Sharples has suggested that the typical patterns of Homeric deliberative self-address (first speaking to the *thumos*, then repudiating what the *thumos* says) can also be understood in terms of self-identification and self-distancing.⁴⁵ This is a mode of analysis which is not available for scholars, such as Voigt and Snell, who presuppose the Cartesian picture of the self as a unitary, self-conscious 'I'. For them, the fact that Homeric psychological processes (including psychological conflict) are couched in terms of the relationship between 'I' and something other than 'I' (*thumos* or 'heart') signifies that the processes involved do not occur within the self. Such a model leaves no scope for the notions of self-identification or self-distancing, but only for distinguishing between what does and does not constitute the unitary, self-conscious self.⁴⁶

If we accept the validity of analysing Homeric discourse in these terms, the passage in *Odyssey* 20 exhibits a notable combination of self-identification and self-distancing in the delineation of Odysseus' heart. On the one hand, the fact that Odysseus addresses the heart at all demarcates it as something that is in some sense 'other'; and this attitude continues the narrator's presentation of the heart in quasi-animal terms, as being like a dog 'barking' to protect her pups.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the heart is addressed in the style appropriate to a person, and responds accordingly (20. 17–24). As we saw, the heart is treated as a partial substitute for Odysseus, embodying the

⁴⁴ On this aspect of Freud's theory, see e.g. Wollheim and Hopkins (1982), esp. chs. 7, 8, 12, 13; and Price (1990), 261–7. On Freud's theory as only partly anti-Cartesian, and, on the implications of the fact for the relationship between Freud and Greek thinking, see 4.2 below, text to nn. 50–2.

⁴⁵ See Dodds (1951), ch. 1, esp. 13 ff.; Sharples (1983), 3.

⁴⁶ See refs. in n. 34 above, and, on Descartes's unitary soul, see Gosling (1990), 88.

⁴⁷ See *Od.* 20. 18–21 and 13–16; the use of the word *κύντερον* ('more outrageous', lit. more 'dog-like') within the self-address (18, cf. *κύων*, 'dog', in the simile, 14), reinforces this point. As Claus notes (1981), 39–40, self-address in Homer always takes the form of dialogue between 'I' and one of the more 'emotional' parts (such as *thumos* or 'heart'), but not the 'intellectual' parts, *phren* or *noos* (mind). See also Plato's characterization of the 'spirited' part as dog-like in its response to reason (*R.* 440d1–2), an image which may have been suggested by the passage from *Od.* 20 cited in 4.1b (see n. 27 above).

capacity for being 'much-enduring' (*πολύτλας*) and sharing his life-history. Although the heart is distinguished from the aspect of Odysseus that makes him characteristically 'of much cunning' (*πολύμητις*),⁴⁸ the passage emphasizes that it is the co-ordination of these aspects that enables him to manifest these two qualities effectively, and so to survive situations such as the present one and that in the Cyclops' cave.⁴⁹ The passage is striking for its combination of (an unusual degree) both of self-distancing and self-identification as regards the heart; and so any interpretation such as Snell's which does not reflect this point,⁵⁰ fails to confront the interpretative issues raised by the passage.

However, to complete this mode of interpretation, we need not only to use these terms of analysis (those of internalization of interpersonal discourse and of self-identification and distancing), but also to explain why we find here this particularly striking version of the relevant patterns. Part of what is involved here is that, as the action nears its climax, the narrative presents the strain placed on Odysseus' capacity for endurance by the continued need for concealment.⁵¹ But, to understand the nature of the strain, and the kind of psychological conflict presented, we need to refer to the ethical factors that generate this conflict. As is clear from the severe condemnation and brutal punishment of the promiscuous serving-women in *Od.* 22. 417–72, their offence is regarded by Odysseus as especially serious. Correspondingly, the response of Odysseus' heart in 'barking in indignation at their bad actions' (*ἀγαιομένου κακὰ ἔργα*) does not represent, as Snell suggests, 'the irrational, the dangerous, the uncanny elements in human action' (1964, 53). It is, rather, a belief-based response, and one that is combined with emotions appropriate to the offence involved. However, Odysseus' situation is such that this response needs to be held in check, until (as in the Cyclops' cave) his cunning can enable him to express this response in deliberated action. It is in this sense, and this only, that the response of the barking heart is 'irrational', and it is for this

⁴⁸ See *Od.* 20. 20: '... you put up with that, until *metis* (cunning) brought you out'; on the general contrast in function between 'emotional' and 'intellectual' parts in Homeric psychology, see Claus (1981), 15 ff., esp. 45–7.

⁴⁹ See further on the co-ordination of psychological functions in Homer, 3.3 below, text to nn. 57–61, and (on analogous co-ordination in philosophical psychology) 4.2 below.

⁵⁰ On Snell (1964), 53–4, see text to nn. 33–4 above.

⁵¹ See Russo (1968), 291–4.

reason that Odysseus distances himself from the response. But he does not wholly disown the response; indeed, the extent to which the heart is characterized, in his address, as a (partial) substitute for himself suggests that he is validating the response, provided that it is one that can be held in check until the appropriate time. In this mode of interpretation, the special qualities of the passage are to be explained by the special character of the ethical situation and the competing claims that it generates, as these are expressed in Homeric psychological (or psycho-ethical) discourse. This is a pattern that we find also in the other, more complex, Homeric and tragic passages discussed here.

3.3 ACHILLES' SWELLING HEART

Everything that you say seems to be acceptable; but my heart swells with anger when I remember the disgraceful way Agamemnon treated me, as though I were some migrant without status.

(*Il.* 9. 645–8)

These famous lines begin Achilles' response to the final appeal made to him in *Iliad* 9, that of Ajax. To make sense of the type of conflict expressed in these lines, we need to place the lines in the context of the psychological language used by the three men appealing to him. This brings up an important methodological point. Snell claimed that the Homeric picture of man is, in effect, that of a field of internal and external forces, with no central, controlling and unifying 'I'.⁵² Subsequent scholars have qualified this claim, pointing out that Homeric vocabulary does sometimes present the person (expressed as 'I' or 'he') as having control over the psychological 'forces', such as 'spirit' or 'anger', that affect him.⁵³ However, what needs more consideration is the question of the criteria that determine whether a Homeric figure is presented as psychologically active or passive. As in the closely related topic of self-identification and distancing, a crucial consideration in Homeric dialogue is that of the ethical attitude adopted by the speaker when he characterizes the psychological state in question. The selection of the psychological mode (active or passive) cannot be explained without reference to the type of atti-

⁵² See esp. Snell (1960), 20: 'man is the open target of a great many forces which impinge on him and penetrate his very core.' See also 1.1 above, text to nn. 10–12.

⁵³ See e.g. Harrison (1960), 74–7; Adkins (1970), 22–3.

tude and behaviour which is presented as normative by the speaker, or without reference to the judgement that he is making about his own, or others' behaviour, by reference to this norm.⁵⁴

To put the point differently, the selection of the psychological mode deployed cannot be explained without reference to what a speaker sees as a 'reasonable' pattern of behaviour. This way of putting the point underlines a second general consideration relevant to these passages in *Iliad* 9. I noted earlier certain parallels between Greek poetic and philosophical psychology which are relevant to the understanding of Greek poetic models of psychological conflict. These include the idea that human beings are, characteristically, psychologically cohesive in so far as their emotions and desires are informed by beliefs and reasoning (3.1 above, text to n. 12). The three men appealing to Achilles, though using differing modes of psychological discourse, all presuppose that his emotions are informed by his beliefs and reasoning, and that the latter can be affected by their presentation of the situation. More precisely, they presuppose that his belief-based emotions can be affected by their judgements about what counts as a reasonable response and about whether Achilles' present stance is reasonable or not. Although there is no single Homeric equivalent for the idea of 'reasonableness',⁵⁵ Homeric discourse anticipates the prevalent Greek philosophical assumption that patterns of emotional response can be characterized as acceptable or unacceptable by reference to shared ethical norms for such responses; and this assumption also informs the phraseology of Achilles and his interlocutors. In Greek philosophy, this topic is one on which conflict may arise between conventional and reflectively-based beliefs about what should count as a 'reasonable' response; and this is also, I think, the basis of the conflict expressed in Achilles' famous lines.

In the course of *Iliad* 9, Achilles is subjected to various types of appeal, each of which combines a particular mode of psychological discourse with a particular ethical stance. The first, and most straightforward, type takes the form of urging the addressee to control an emotion (or a psychological 'part' such as *thumos*, which is

⁵⁴ Similar factors are relevant in the interpretation of psychological language in tragedy: see further Goldhill (1986), ch. 7; Gill (1990a), 78–85; also below 3.4, text to nn. 144–8, 187–8; 3.5, text to nn. 187–8.

⁵⁵ However, some Homeric phraseology is suggestive in this respect: see e.g. *Il.* 9. 554, 18. 108, and text to nn. 62, 92 below. On Greek philosophical thinking about what is 'reasonable', see 3.1 above, text to nn. 17–22.

correlated with the emotion) in response to certain reasons for doing so given by the speaker. This mode of appeal is often combined with an assumption of 'fatherly' superiority by the speaker over the addressee.⁵⁶ Thus, Odysseus prefaces his report of Agamemnon's offer of compensatory gifts by impersonating Achilles' father, Peleus, as a way of assuming the authority to give the younger man fatherly advice.⁵⁷ He attributes to Peleus these parting words to his son: 'restrain the great-hearted spirit [*μεγαλήτορα θυμὸν*] *ἴσχειν* in your breast, for friendliness [*φιλοφροσύνη*] is better; and put an end to strife, the producer of evils, so that you may win greater honour among the Greeks, both young and old' (255–8). He couples this with advice of a similar type given in his own person: '... stop, lay down your spirit-grieving bitterness [*ἔα . . . χόλον θυμαλγέα*]; Agamemnon offers worthwhile gifts if you abandon your anger [*μεταλλήξαντι χόλοις*]' (260–1).

The succeeding speech of Phoenix is centred on an appeal of a similar type. Phoenix refers twice to his own quasi-paternal relationship to Achilles (one endorsed by Peleus himself) as providing the basis for urging the younger man in these terms: 'conquer your great spirit [*δάμασον θυμὸν μέγαν*]; you should not always have a pitiless heart [*νηλεὲς ἦτορ ἔχειν*]'.⁵⁸ His concluding appeal to Achilles, like that of Odysseus, is based on the prospect of enhanced honour (*time*) as well as gifts if Achilles renounces his anger in return.⁵⁹ The appeals of this type presuppose that the addressee is, in principle, able to exercise control over his emotions (that he can 'restrain his spirit' or 'abandon his anger') if he is given sufficient reason to do so.⁶⁰ The adoption of fatherly authority is naturally coupled with the direct, imperatival form of this appeal. It is also naturally coupled

⁵⁶ For other examples of this mode of appeal, see e.g. *Il.* 1. 254–84, esp. 282–3 (Nestor to Agamemnon and Achilles); 19. 216–37, esp. 216–20 (Odysseus to Achilles). On Homeric modes of discourse in general, see Martin (1989), chs. 2–3, esp. 101–9, on Nestor's characteristic modes.

⁵⁷ As noted in 2.7 above, text to n. 180, Odysseus substitutes this preface for Agamemnon's 'apology' in 9. 115–20, a substitution which helps to undermine the force of Agamemnon's appeal, since it enhances the authoritative stance that Achilles finds objectionable.

⁵⁸ *Il.* 9. 496–7: see also 438–43 (taken with 254–8) and 485–95.

⁵⁹ Cf. 9. 600–5 with 299–306. See also 515–17: if Agamemnon were not offering gifts and renouncing his anger, Phoenix would not be urging Achilles 'to cast aside his wrath' (*μῆνιν ἀπορρίψαντα*).

⁶⁰ This assumption is not confined to the appeals to control one's anger. See also Thetis' urging to Achilles to 'rage' (*μῆνι*, *Il.* 1. 422); and, for 'raging' as a deliberate action, see 2. 769, 772, 7. 230, 12. 10.

with the implied assumption that the speaker is able to specify what constitutes an appropriate emotional response to the reason given, as a result of his experience of properly conducted social interchange.⁶¹

However, in his elaborately structured speech, Phoenix employs a different mode of psychological language to describe the responses of Meleager, whom he uses as a cautionary example to deter Achilles from persisting in his wrath. Meleager's responses both in his anger and its cessation, are described in passive terms, as those of one acting on impulse or under pressure rather than responding to reasons. Thus: 'When anger came over Meleager [*ἔδυν χόλος*] which swells [*οἰδάνει*] also in the hearts of others, even if their minds are sensible [*νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων*], then he, angered in his heart [*χωόμενος κῆρ*] . . .' (553–5). Here, as elsewhere, the use of psychologically passive vocabulary seems to signify an intense or impulsive emotional response,⁶² a point underlined by the contrast with the normally 'sensible' minds of those involved. Meleager's eventual return to battle is presented in similar terms: 'His spirit was aroused [*ώρίνετο θυμός*] as he heard of these terrible events . . . [and so he returned to battle] giving way to his spirit [*εἰξας ὃ θυμῷ*]' (595, 598). The main point of Phoenix's story of Meleager is to show how the latter responded 'unreasonably' in the way that he gave up his anger, and how, as a result, he forfeited the compensatory gifts and honour that he would otherwise have gained (598–605). The vocabulary chosen to describe this response, like that used to describe the onset of his anger, seems designed to underline its impulsive, 'unreasonable' character; and both types of expression are in pointed contrast to the psychologically active, 'reasonable' response that Phoenix urges Achilles himself to give.

Although Phoenix uses a different mode of vocabulary to characterize Meleager's responses, the use of this mode forms an integral part of his overall 'fatherly' appeal. Indeed, the use of an allegedly appropriate parallel substantiates Phoenix's authority to make such an appeal.⁶³ The third appeal, that of Ajax, is of a different type, both in the stance adopted and the reasons offered. Although the mode of

⁶¹ See also the appeals listed in n. 56 above, taken together with Martin (1989), 102–4; Schofield (1986), 28–9.

⁶² See e.g. *Il.* 1. 188, 9. 436 (Phoenix's description of Achilles), 16. 52–5 and 18. 107–11, discussed in text to nn. 92–6 below.

⁶³ Analogously, Nestor's allusion to figures and situations known only to him helps to substantiate his authority in *Il.* 1. 260–73.

psychological vocabulary in which he couches his appeal resembles the first type, it takes on a rather different colour in this context. I noted in Chapter 2 that Ajax's speech is the one which seems to engage most closely with Achilles' reasons for rejecting the gifts, as presented in his reply to Odysseus. Ajax cites the willingness of the father or brother of a murdered relative to accept compensation from the killer, and so calls into question, by implication, Achilles' restrictions on the kind of person from whom compensation is acceptable. Also, he focuses his appeal on the claims of friendship and of *aidos* ('shame'), rather than on the advantages to Achilles of gaining gifts and honour, thus taking up Achilles' emphasis on the central importance of properly conducted *philia* ('friendship').⁶⁴ To put the point in terms more apposite to the present discussion, he offers arguments which are more likely to lead Achilles to see the positive response as a 'reasonable' one, that is, one which answers to his ethical position and correlated feelings.

Associated with this difference in the basis of his appeal is a difference in stance on Ajax's part. Whereas the previous two speakers made their appeal 'from above', so to speak, from a position of fatherly authority, Ajax makes his as an equal, a fellow-*philos*, though one whose present situation puts him in a position of inferiority. This is a type of approach which, as we can tell from other cases, is more likely to gain a positive response from Achilles, since it invites him to give a generous or 'gratuitous' gesture rather than putting him under pressure to act as the speaker claims is appropriate.⁶⁵ Ajax, first of all, describes Achilles' present response in pointedly third-personal form, presenting it as a deliberated one: 'Achilles has made savage the great-hearted spirit [*ἄγριον . . . θέτο μεγάλητορα θυμόν*] in his breast, harsh man that he is, and gives no consideration to the friendship of his comrades [*φιλότητος ἑταίρων*] . . .' (628–30). The third-personal form seems designed to suggest, woundingly, that Achilles is no longer one of their number and is beyond the reach of properly grounded ethical argument, a

⁶⁴ See 9. 628–42, and 2.8 above, text to n. 201; also Cairns (1993), 92–4. Contrast the emphasis of Odysseus and Phoenix on gaining gifts and honour (9. 260–306, 515–99); they also appeal to Achilles' sense of *philia* and his pity (247–51, 300–2, and, esp., 434–514), but do so in the context of their overall 'fatherly' stance.

⁶⁵ See Achilles' relative responsiveness to this type of approach from Patroclus, 16. 21–100, on which see text to nn. 86–91 below; and, more unexpectedly, from Priam, who 'impersonates' Peleus in his supplication of Achilles, 24. 486–506. On the 'gratuitous' gesture, see 2.7 above, text to n. 128.

suggestion to which Achilles is likely to be highly sensitive, given the position taken up in his great speech.⁶⁶ However, after giving a further reason why Achilles should respond positively to their appeals (the counter-example of compensation for murder of kin), Ajax addresses Achilles directly in similar terms, saying that 'the gods have put into your breast a spirit [*thumon*] that is implacable and bad—because of just one girl!' (636–8). The reference to divine influence seems here to be simply a non-significant variant of expression.⁶⁷ Here, as in 628–30, Ajax presents Achilles' emotional responses as deliberate, and as reflecting judgements, which need to be met with appropriate reasons on the other side. Accordingly, Ajax ends with a direct appeal to Achilles, of the kind likely to have most validity for him. He urges Achilles to 'make your spirit mild' (*ἴλαον ἐνθεο θυμόν*), and have respect (*αἰδέσσαι*, i.e. show *aidos*) for the house 'in which are gathered those of the Greeks who wish to be most worthy of your care [*κῆδιστοί*, literally, 'most closely related to you'] and most *philo*i to you' (639–42). Although Ajax's appeal, like the 'fatherly' ones which preceded it, uses active psychological language to suggest that Achilles' emotional response falls within his agency, this language serves as the vehicle of a different, and more subtle, approach. Whereas his predecessors use such language to suggest that they can prescribe what would be a 'reasonable' response for Achilles to give (one which is in line with normal modes of social interchange, as they present these), Ajax uses it as the vehicle of an appeal that Achilles himself is likely to find both most reasonable (based on good grounds) and most emotionally compelling.

This interpretation of the psycho-ethical significance of Ajax's appeal (viewed in relation to that of the earlier appeals) provides the basis, I think, for making sense of the the conflict expressed in Achilles' answering lines:

Everything that you say seems to me acceptable [*kata thumon*]; but my heart swells with anger [or 'bile', *οἰδάνεται κραδίη χόλῳ*] when I remember the

⁶⁶ See 2.7 above, text to nn. 153–62; note also Achilles' reply to Phoenix, 9. 612–19, insisting that Phoenix is still very much his *philos*, and, therefore, should not act as *philos* to Agamemnon, whom Achilles regards as having put himself outside the bounds of properly conducted *philia*.

⁶⁷ See the comparable non-significant variation in 9. 600–1; and see further Lesky (1961), 23–5.

disgraceful way Agamemnon treated me in the presence of the Greeks, as though I were some migrant without status [ἀτίμητον μετανάστην] (645–8).

What requires explanation is the nature of the contrast between the points made in the first two lines ('Everything . . . but . . .'), and the significance of the psychological mode ('my heart swells with anger') chosen in the second line. A familiar type of explanation is the one offered by Jasper Griffin: 'Achilles himself has to admit that the arguments for his return are unanswerable. What prevents him is the intensity of his anger, his passionate nature.'⁶⁸ Griffin here, in effect, ascribes to Achilles a type of *akrasia*, or 'weakness of will', in which the person concerned acts, consciously, against his recognition of the better course of action.⁶⁹ This line of interpretation would be regarded as untenable by anyone who accepts Snell's view that Homeric figures do not have enough psychological cohesion to be capable of division *within themselves*.⁷⁰ However, the preceding discussion of passages from *Iliad* 9 may have helped to cast doubt on the idea that Homeric psychology, as exhibited in Homeric discourse, consistently fails to embody a conception of the person as psychologically cohesive in the way that Snell claims.⁷¹ We may take it that Homeric figures can be presented as experiencing some type of psychological, or psycho-ethical, conflict within themselves. The question, here and elsewhere, is whether they are actually so presented, and, if so, how we should analyse the conflict involved.

Conceivably, the preceding discussion of the appeals to which Achilles is subjected, especially that of Ajax, might be taken as lending support to Griffin's interpretation. Achilles does not, of course, find the arguments of Odysseus, or Phoenix, in so far as they resemble Odysseus', 'unanswerable': he answers them at length in his great speech.⁷² But he makes no attempt to answer those of Ajax

⁶⁸ Griffin (1980), 74. Griffin's interpretation is coupled with criticism of Redfield's assertion (1975), 106, that 'Achilles is the victim of his own ethic' (on which see 2.3 above, text to nn. 58–9, 62) as distinct from being the victim of his own nature.

⁶⁹ On weakness of will and *akrasia* see 3.1 above, text to nn. 10, 13 and 3.6 below, text to nn. 219–31. Medea in E. *Med.* 1078–80 is usually taken as the classic example of such conscious or 'clear-eyed' *akrasia* (see 3.5 below).

⁷⁰ See Snell (1960), 8–22; also (1964), 52–6, discussed in 3.2 above, text to nn. 33–4 and 3.5 below, text to nn. 149–51.

⁷¹ There are also serious questions about whether Snell's post-Cartesian and post-Kantian assumptions provide the best available conceptual basis for making sense of Homeric models of mind and ethical motivation (see Ch. 1).

⁷² On the (partial) similarity of approach between Odysseus and Phoenix, see text to nn. 56–62 above and n. 64 above. Achilles does, however, modify his position in

and seems to concede their validity (643). Although Ajax's brief comments do not begin to confront the complex reflective reasoning contained in Achilles' great speech, they do fasten on some key features of Achilles' position. Thus, the contrast drawn in 645–6 ('Everything . . . but . . .') might be read as expressing Achilles' recognition of the fact that, as Griffin puts it, only 'the intensity of his anger, his passionate nature' prevents him from acting in line with Ajax's words. On this view, Achilles' description of himself in psychologically passive or impulsive terms in 646 ('my heart swells with anger') would be taken as signifying self-distancing from what he sees as an unreasonable response. If, as seems likely, his phraseology echoes the language used by Phoenix to describe Meleager (553–4),⁷³ this might seem to underline the self-distancing: Achilles presents himself, ruefully, as Meleager-like in his anger, impervious to reasonable persuasion.

But I do not think that this is the most plausible way of interpreting these lines, if one accepts the implications of the discussion so far. I am not convinced that the lines should be taken as an acknowledgement that Achilles is acting against his better judgement; or that they express, as Griffin seems to suggest, a contrast between the reasonable arguments that Achilles cannot answer and the 'passion' which prevents him from acting in line with those arguments.⁷⁴ The phrasing of lines 645–6, in particular, indicate an awareness of conflict on Achilles' part. But I think that this is better understood as an awareness of conflict between two ethical claims (and, to some extent, two types of ethical claim) and the belief-based feelings associated with these, than between 'reason' and 'passion'. Achilles' phraseology in 645 (what Ajax has said seems to me *kata thumon*, 'in accordance with my spirit') does not, in view of the strongly emotional connotations of *thumos*, indicate that Achilles

response to each of these appeals, as though granting some validity to the claims embodied in each: see 2.7 above, text to nn. 158–62.

⁷³ Cf. 9. 646, 'my heart swells with anger' (or 'bile', οἰδάνεται κραδίη χόλω), with 553–4, 'anger [bile], which swells in the breasts' (χόλος, ὅς . . . οἰδάνει ἐν στήθεσσι); on this linkage, see also refs. in n. 84 below.

⁷⁴ Although Greek psychological discourse, from Homer onwards, has ways of expressing the conflict between deliberated, long-term objectives and localized impulses (see e.g. *Od.* 20. 18–21 and 3.2 above), the use of the reason–passion contrast as a standard way of analysing ethical dilemmas belongs to a different thought-world, that of Stoicism and its Roman analogues, and of some modern (e.g. Kantian) moral thinking. See also 3.5 below, text to nn. 150–1; also n. 99 below.

sees Ajax as making an appeal that is distinctively *rational* (by contrast with the claims on the other side).⁷⁵ As we have seen, Ajax's speech seems designed rather to combine the reasons that Achilles is likely to find most cogent with the emotional appeals (ones correlated with those reasons) that are likely to have most effect on him. Also, it is far from obvious that, in speaking of his heart 'swelling with bile', Achilles is actually disowning his anger (as he might be doing in a vocabulary centred on the reason-passion contrast).⁷⁶ He does, after all, couple the description of his 'swelling heart' with a statement of the reason why it swells; and the reason, Agamemnon's humiliating treatment of him, constitutes a reiteration of his basic reason, given repeatedly in his great speech, for 'not being persuaded' by the offer of compensatory gifts.⁷⁷

It is worth noting that Aristotle cites part of line 648 to illustrate the kind of grounds that activate anger, and specifically, to illustrate the response of anger to 'insolence' (*hubris*). Aristotle's general analysis of anger is that it is an affective state (a mode of desire), but one that is activated by certain beliefs, particularly beliefs about the conduct of the interpersonal relationships in which one has been involved.⁷⁸ Aristotle cites Achilles' words in connection with the response activated by the belief that one has experienced the kind of insolence involved 'in rob[bing] people of the honour due to them' (*Rh.* 1378^b30). In the same context, he notes, as a ground of resentment, the failure to receive the respect merited by one's own good treatment of others, particularly when such failure is shown by one's friends.⁷⁹ Aristotle's general discussion, and his citation of line 648,

⁷⁵ For *thumos* as emotional (this need not mean imperviousness to good reasons), see 9. 255, 260, 496, 595, 629, 635 (cited in text to nn. 58–67 above); and see further Claus (1981), 39–42. The variant phrase used in the comparable line 1. 286 (Agamemnon to Nestor), *kata moiran*, might seem rather to carry the connotation, 'according to what is proper (in social interchange)'.

⁷⁶ For cases where a figure disowns her feelings in a psychological vocabulary centred on the reason-passion contrast, see e.g. Seneca, *Phaedra* 177–85 (disowning lust), *Medea* 926–32 (disowning anger); on the latter passage, and on the psychological language involved (by contrast with Euripides'), see Gill (1987).

⁷⁷ Cf. 9. 647–8 with 334–6, 344–5, 367–8, 375–6, 386–7; see further 2.7, text to nn. 147–8, 157. See also Irwin (1983), 185, dissenting from Griffin (1980), 74.

⁷⁸ 'Anger may be defined as a desire accompanied by pain for a conspicuous revenge for a conspicuous slight at the hands of men who have no call to slight oneself or one's friends', *Rhetoric* (*Rh.*) 2. 2, 1378^a30–2, tr. Barnes (1984). See also *NE* 1149^a32–4; see further Fortenbaugh (1970), 80; Charles (1984), 177–9; Sherman (1989), 169–71.

⁷⁹ This is, of course, a key theme in Achilles' great speech, see esp. *Il.* 9. 316–45, and 2.7 above, text to nn. 140–51.

reflect the view that there are some occasions when the fact that one's heart 'swells with bile' is a proper part of a 'reasonable' response to one's situation;⁸⁰ and a similar view may well be taken as underlying Achilles' statements in 646–8. After all, the embassy as a whole, as well as Achilles' great speech, are based on the assumption that anger is a legitimate response to breaches in the norm of interpersonal conduct. Therefore, it is far from obvious that Achilles' phraseology in 645–8 means that he is distancing himself from his anger. He is, more probably, affirming it and justifying it, while acknowledging the conflict thus generated with other reasonable feelings which are activated by Ajax's speech.

But, to bring out the full significance of the lines, it is not enough simply to say that they express a conflict between two ethical claims; they also express a conflict between two ethical claims of a rather different type. On the one hand, there is the relatively straightforward claim (powerfully articulated by Ajax) that Achilles should come to the help of his *philoi*, and that his objections to accepting Agamemnon's gifts are insufficient to override this claim. On the other, there is the claim generated by the reflective reasoning displayed in the great speech: namely, the desire to make an exemplary gesture to dramatize the extent to which Agamemnon's behaviour has undermined the basis of co-operative *philia*. Achilles' reiteration of his grievance against Agamemnon may, thus, be taken not simply as a counterclaim to that expressed by Ajax, but as a kind of short-hand reference to the pattern of argument and the exemplary stance taken up in the great speech.⁸¹

The phrase now added to his earlier statement of grievance, 'as if I were some migrant without status' (648) may be taken as a signal of the underlying issue raised in that speech, namely the question of what is involved in treating someone as a fellow-member of one's community.⁸² The apparent allusion in 646 to Phoenix's (cautionary)

⁸⁰ Aristotle does not cite 9. 645 in this connection; but his definition of anger in *DA* 403^a29–^b3, as, physically, 'the boiling of the blood . . . around the heart' (and, logically, 'the desire to return pain for pain') may be based on such Homeric phrases. For anger as an emotion which can form part of the pattern of response of a virtuous person, if felt as 'reason dictates', see *NE* 1125^b31–5.

⁸¹ See refs. in n. 77 above.

⁸² The phrase may take on added resonance in the light of Phoenix's report of Peleus' very different way of treating a 'migrant without status', i.e. Phoenix himself (9. 480–4). The phrase is reiterated in 16. 59, in a passage discussed in text to nn. 86–8 below.

characterization of Meleager's response may be relevant here.⁸³ As part of his exemplary gesture, Achilles now *chooses* to respond as Meleager did: that is, he chooses to have his heart 'swell' with anger or bile at his ill-treatment, and chooses not to enter the battle until the fire reaches his tent.⁸⁴ He thus indicates his willingness to risk losing the gifts and honour that are presented as desirable by Phoenix (and Odysseus) as well as—more painfully—to fail to meet his friends' claims on his help, in order to fulfil his continuing desire to show that 'not even so would Agamemnon win over my spirit [*thumon*], at least until he had paid me back all his spirit-grieving insult [*θυμαλγέα λώβην*]'.⁸⁵

Before summing up the implications of these Homeric passages, I note two later passages in the *Iliad* (16. 52–5, 60–3, and 18. 107–13) which are related to 9. 645–8 and which can help to place it in an intelligible context. These passages bring out further the capacity of Homeric psychological vocabulary to express relatively complex psycho-ethical attitudes, which include a degree of self-distancing. However, they also lend support to my reading of 9. 645–8 by showing that Achilles, even when distancing himself from his anger and its consequences, never presents it as unjustified and as being a passionate response which is wholly in conflict with soundly based ethical claims.

At the start of *Iliad* 16, Patroclus delivers an appeal to Achilles which is, in attitude and grounds, an intensified version of that of Ajax in *Iliad* 9. Like that of Ajax, it combines persuasive characterization of Achilles' stubbornness with an appeal to his feelings for (and commitment to) his *philoi* in their desperate situation.⁸⁶ Achilles' response is interestingly complex. He uses language to

⁸³ See n. 73 above.

⁸⁴ Cf. 9. 650–5 with 587–9; for the idea that Achilles' variations in his course of action (9. 357–60, 428–9, 618–19) represent ways of combining a response to the claim made on him at each point with the desire to make an exemplary gesture, see 2.7 above, text to nn. 158–62. On Achilles as choosing to act as Meleager does, see also Whitman (1958), 191; Claus (1975), 27.

⁸⁵ See 9. 386–7 and discussion in 2.7 above, text to nn. 163–81. That couplet (9. 386–7) also expresses the idea that there can be grounds, of a special type, that legitimate a response (one of anger) that might otherwise seem to be one of 'unreasonable' impulse.

⁸⁶ Cf. 16. 33–5 with 9. 629–32 and 16. 23–7 with 9. 639–42. Note also the pointed combination of active and passive phraseology in 16. 30: 'let not this anger hold me', *μη ἐμέ . . . λάβοι χάλος* (distancing use of passive vocabulary, as in 9. 533–4), 'which you maintain', *ὃν σὺ φυλάσσεις* (i.e. which you perpetuate deliberately); cf. 9. 629–30, 636–8, discussed in text to nn. 65–6 above.

describe his anger which is more unambiguously passive than that of 9. 646: 'but this terrible pain comes over my heart and spirit [*αἰνὸν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἰκάνει*] . . . it is a terrible pain for me, since I have suffered grievous pains in my spirit [*ἄλγεα θυμῶ*]' (52–5).⁸⁷ However, this passive vocabulary is not used actually to disown his anger; and, to this extent, the vocabulary is not self-distancing. Syntactically, the fact of his continued anger, justified in similar terms to those of *Iliad* 9, is presented as his reason for not re-entering battle, in correction to the one suggested by Patroclus.⁸⁸ But Achilles does go on to qualify his previous position:

But we shall let these things lie in the past [*τὰ μὲν προτετύχθαι ἑάσομεν*]; it was not by any means my intention [*πῶς . . . ἐνὶ φρεσὶν*] to rage without ceasing. But I did say that I would not put an end to my wrath [*μηνιθμὸν καταπανσέμεν*], until the clamour of battle reached my ships' (60–3).

So he lets Patroclus go into battle in his place and in his armour. At this point, Achilles' state of mind and ethical position may seem hopelessly conflicted; and there are certainly more indications of internal conflict here than in 9. 645–8.⁸⁹ But the conflict is still one that is best understood as being between competing ethical responses to reasons (together with appropriate feelings) rather than one between an ethical response to reasons and unjustified passion. Indeed, his remarks in 60–3 may help to clarify the point that his previous position (to stay until the fire reached his ships) represented a deliberate decision, and one designed to satisfy his desire for an exemplary gesture to dramatize Agamemnon's wrongdoing, without ruling out completely the possibility of coming to the help of his *philoi*.⁹⁰ In effect, he reiterates that decision here, while responding to the additional grounds that Patroclus now offers (the terrible plight of Achilles' *philoi*, 16. 23–7) by acceding to the latter's request to go in his place (38–43). On this reading, Achilles' present sense of

⁸⁷ The reiterated language of 'pain' may echo, and answer, Patroclus' opening point, that 'such pain has come on the Greeks' (*τοῖον γὰρ ἄχος βεβήκεν Ἀχαιοῦς*, 16. 22).

⁸⁸ Cf. 16. 53–4 and 56–9 with 9. 647–8, 334–6, 367–8; see also 16. 36–7. 16. 53–4, in particular, 'when a man [Agamemnon] wishes to deprive [of status] one of his equals [*τὸν ὅμοιον*], and to take away his prize of honour [*geras*]', seems to allude to Achilles' fundamental ethical grounds for his anger (see 2.7 above, text to nn. 148–57).

⁸⁹ See esp. the strongly passive vocabulary of 52–5 (more unequivocal than in 9. 646), and the adversative phrasing and awkward enjambment of 60–3.

⁹⁰ Cf. 16. 60–3, esp. 'it was not by any means by intention', with 9. 650–55, discussed in text to n. 84 above.

psycho-ethical conflict, as expressed in these lines, is intelligible as a development of the conflict between Achilles' reflectively-based stance and his response to the claims of his *philoî* on his pity and generosity.⁹¹

A similar general point can be made about a related passage (18. 107–13), which falls within the speech in which Achilles accepts Thetis' prophecy of his imminent death:

Let quarrelling perish from gods and human beings, and bile [*χόλος*], which drives even a sensible person [*πολύφρονά*] to become angry, and which, much sweeter than dripping honey, spreads like smoke in people's breasts; in this way Agamemnon, lord of men, recently made me angry [*ἐμὲ . . . ἐχόλωσεν*]. But, pained as we are [*ἄχρῦμενοί*], we shall let these things lie in the past, subduing by necessity the spirit in my breast [*θυμὸν . . . δαμάσαντες ἀνάγκη*].

Here, more fully than in *Iliad* 9 or 16, Achilles distances himself from his anger, presenting it as something other than himself ('strife', 'bile') but which has had a powerful impact on him.⁹² The sense of self-distancing is heightened by the generalizing phraseology of 107–10, and the observation (which implies both past involvement and present detachment) that anger has its own pleasure and the capacity to generate itself.⁹³ Yet, even here, Achilles does not repudiate his anger, in the sense of saying that it was unreasonable of him to become angry and to maintain his anger in the way that he did. The opposite is implied by the statement, immediately after the general comment about 'strife' and 'bile', that 'in this way, Agamemnon . . . made me angry' (*ἐμὲ . . . ἐχόλωσεν*, 111).⁹⁴ The

⁹¹ This interpretation of Achilles' position might help to clarify the (admittedly puzzling) lines 72–3 and 83–6: part of Achilles' exemplary objective is that he should gain both gifts and girl *on his terms*, i.e. in a way that involves the counter-humiliation of Agamemnon (9. 386–7). His consent to Patroclus' mission to bring help to their *philoî* is conditional on Patroclus' not jeopardizing this objective. See further Tsagarakis (1971), 263–7.

⁹² Distancing is expressed in the 'let . . . perish' construction of 18. 107–8, the contrast between 'bile' and 'even a sensible person' (108, cf. 9. 553–4), and in the depiction of anger as a quasi-physical or organic force with a life of its own (109–10).

⁹³ These features helped to make the lines favourite ones among Greek philosophers: see e.g. Pl. *Phlb.* 47e, Arist. *Rh.* 1370^b10–12, 1378^b2–10, Gal. *PHP* 3. 2. 12, p. 178 De Lacy, and 4.1.10, p. 236 De Lacy.

⁹⁴ See Achilles' related comments in *Il.* 19, responding to Agamemnon's quasi-apology: 'Father Zeus, you give men great delusions [*ἄρας*]; otherwise Agamemnon would never have stirred up the spirit in my breast in such a lasting way [*θυμὸν . . . ὥρινε διαμπερὲς*], nor would he have taken the girl from me so awkwardly against my

'pain' of his grievance still matters (112); and, although Achilles now undertakes to 'subdue' or 'conquer' his spirit as well as 'letting these things lie in the past',⁹⁵ this is a response to a new and more urgent 'necessity' (*anangke*), that of pressing on with vengeance against Hector, and not to the realization that the earlier anger was unreasonable.⁹⁶ Although Achilles does now what he was urged to do in *Iliad* 9 by Odysseus and Phoenix ('conquer' or 'restrain' his spirit), he does so not in response to the type of fatherly appeals made there,⁹⁷ but in response to a quite different type of claim, and one which replaces, rather than invalidates the earlier ones.

In my discussion of *Il.* 9. 645–8, and of related passages, my aim has been not simply to offer what seems to me the most plausible reading of the lines, but also to illustrate the pattern of thinking about human psychology expressed there. In particular, I have tried to identify one of the types of psychological (or, better, psycho-ethical) conflict which tend to arise within this pattern of thinking; and to distinguish this from models of psycho-ethical conflict, based on a different pattern of thinking about the person, which some modern critics have used to analyse these passages. Both here, and in the case of *Od.* 20. 18–21, I have been critical of the use of the reason–passion contrast (as deployed by Snell and Griffin) as the basis of an interpretative framework for the conflicts involved. Later, I criticize its deployment by Snell as the basis for his reading of the conflict displayed in Medea's great monologue.⁹⁸

The reason–passion contrast, at least as understood by these critics, seems to be a poor starting-point for interpreting conflicts in a psycho-ethical framework in which it is assumed that people's emotions and desires are, characteristically, informed by beliefs and reasoning.⁹⁹ The conflicts to which this type of framework gives rise

will and found himself helpless [*ἐμεῦ δέκοντος ἀμήχανος*]', 270–3. As Taplin (1992), 209, brings out, Achilles, while acknowledging Agamemnon's explanation for his act (by reference to divinely inspired *ate*, 19. 86–90), restores the customary Homeric 'double motivation', by presenting the act as one in which Agamemnon was also the agent. In addition, Achilles presents it as constituting grounds for a response of anger which is not unjustified in itself, despite its disastrous consequences.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Il.* 18. 112–13 with 16. 60.

⁹⁶ *Il.* 18. 98–100.

⁹⁷ See 9. 496, 255–6, 260, discussed above (text to nn. 57–61).

⁹⁸ See 3.1 above, text to n. 9; 3.2 above, text to nn. 33–4, 50; text to nn. 68–70, 74–5 above; and 3.5 below, text to nn. 149–51.

⁹⁹ At least, this is so if 'passion' is taken to be non-rational (not based on beliefs and reasoning) as well as 'unreasonable' (contrary to ethical norms), as it seems to be by

centre, typically, on the question of which belief-based emotion or desire is to be regarded as 'reasonable' (supported by better reasons) under the present circumstances. Thus, I suggested that, in *Odyssey* 20, Odysseus understandably saw his (belief-based and justifiable) desire to kill the serving-women as less reasonable, under the circumstances, than the desire to do so after he had punished the suitors. In *Iliad* 9, and also in the passages to be discussed in the *Ajax* and *Medea*, we find a more complex type of conflict. Here, there is a conflict between the kind of response that seems 'reasonable' by normal ethical standards and one that the person concerned (the 'problematic hero') sees as justified by her reflective reasoning on the basic principles of co-operative conduct. The intensity of these conflicts derives from the fact that the hero sees the force of the reasons, and the validity of the correlated emotional responses, on either side.

In each of these three cases, as I interpret them, the hero, though seeing the force of the countervailing reasons, reaffirms the stance based on her reflective reasoning. In terms of the reason-passion contest, she reaffirms the course of action urged by 'passion': Achilles, for instance, acts as his 'swelling heart' urges. Although, as is clear from Snell's writings, the reason-passion contest *can* be used to characterize this kind of choice (the response is presented as a conscious surrender to passion),¹⁰⁰ the analysis offered is not one which, in my view, matches the type of psycho-ethical thinking expressed in the passages. In particular, it fails to explain convincingly why the figure opts for the more 'irrational' line of action. I have offered a contrasting line of interpretation and analysis for Achilles' decision to act as his 'swelling heart' urges: and in the next two sections I do the same for the analogous decisions of Ajax and Medea.

3.4 AJAX'S WOMANIZED SPEECH

The so-called 'deception-speech' in the *Ajax* (646-92) is (notoriously) difficult to interpret.¹⁰¹ But I think that its thought-

Snell and Griffin. The reason-passion contrast seems to have been used in a more psychologically appropriate way by the Stoic Chrysippus in discussing Medea; see 3.6 below, text to nn. 196-213.

¹⁰⁰ Snell (1964), 51-6; see 3.5 below, text to nn. 179-84.

¹⁰¹ For a survey of interpretations, see Winnington-Ingram (1980), 46 n. 107.

forms and mode of expression can be illuminated by being discussed in this context. On the question of the interpretation of this speech, I accept the main theses of some recent discussions: that the speech is not intended primarily to deceive, and that Ajax's real position (one unaltered throughout the play) is indicated by his bitterly ironic phraseology.¹⁰² However, I question the assumption of these interpreters that the speech is, at a fundamental level, a monologue, indeed a soliloquy, and one which expresses the kind of heroic individualism which does not engage with the ethical claims made by others.¹⁰³ It seems to me better understood as being, at a fundamental level, a duologue, in which Ajax responds, though indirectly, to the ethical claims made by Tecmessa in an earlier speech (485-524). Although Ajax's speech reaffirms the decision made earlier, against which Tecmessa had been arguing, to commit suicide as an exemplary gesture (430-80), I think that it does so in a way that answers, rather than ignores, Tecmessa's arguments. The speech seems to me to express the same type of psycho-ethical conflict as that expressed by Achilles in *Il.* 9. 645-8 and by Medea in *Med.* 1021-80: namely that between the desire to make an exemplary gesture based on reflective reasoning about ethical principles and the recognition of the validity of other, more standard, types of ethical claim. Here, as in those other cases, the figure concerned reaffirms the deliberated exemplary gesture, but in a way that acknowledges the more standard ethical claim made by the other person.

My suggestion, then, is that the 'deception-speech' (646-92) forms a continuation of the argument between Ajax and Tecmessa in the preceding scene (430-524), an argument about what nobility (*eugeneia*) requires of Ajax in the present situation. In considering this argument in this scene, it is helpful to draw comparisons with the dialogue between Achilles and his interlocutors in *Iliad* 9, a prototype which underlies this scene, like other tragic scenes.¹⁰⁴ Ajax regards the refusal of the Greek leaders to award him the arms of Achilles as being a massive act of humiliation (as Achilles regards the seizure of Briseïs), and one which, in the light of his exceptional services to the Greeks, represents a gross breach in reciprocal

¹⁰² See *Ai.* 650-2, 657-9, 666-8, 677-82; see further Knox (1979), 134-44; Winnington-Ingram (1980), 46-55; Blundell (1989), 84-5.

¹⁰³ See text to nn. 124-5 below.

¹⁰⁴ See 2.9 above, text to n. 217; Knox (1964), 51-2.

friendship and the exchange of acts of favour (*charis*).¹⁰⁵ However, unlike Achilles in *Iliad* 9, Ajax is not in the position of being able to set terms to his *philoî* for what should count as 'paying back all his spirit-grieving insult'.¹⁰⁶ His position is rather that of having tried, and failed, to make the Greek leaders 'pay back' his insult, and of experiencing the more intense humiliation, as well as the greater enmity, that is the result of this.¹⁰⁷ He also regards it as ethically and emotionally impossible for him to take the step threatened by Achilles, of going home.¹⁰⁸

It is the dilemma that arises from this situation that is faced by Ajax in the latter part of his main speech in this scene (430–80). These lines (457–80) have the same general form as the Iliadic deliberative monologues; and, like most of those monologues, the goal is that of finding an available means, under present circumstances, of acting in an honourable way.¹⁰⁹ In another way, Ajax's goal may be seen (like Achilles' in *Iliad* 9) as that of making an exemplary gesture to dramatize his sense of the ethical offensiveness of his humiliation. To respond fully to Ajax's statement of his dilemma, we need, as in the case of the Iliadic monologues, to recognize the depth of the values of shame and honour that Ajax presupposes, and to do so in spite of the countervailing pressure of the Kantian strand in our own ethical framework. It is important to see how shame and honour are interlocked, on the one hand, with the maintenance of proper modes of interpersonal reciprocity, and on the other, with certain kinds of 'internalized' responses by the agent.¹¹⁰ Ajax's indignation at his loss of honour (*time*) is based not simply on his failure to acquire a valuable status-symbol. It is also grounded, as it is for Achilles, in his conviction of the wrongness of the Greek leaders' decision, its inconsistency with his merits, and, thus, the breach involved in proper modes of chieftainly reciprocity. In other words, it is not just Ajax's humiliation, but the *unjustified* nature of this humiliation that rankles, as well as what this indicates

¹⁰⁵ See n. 111 below.

¹⁰⁶ See *Il.* 9. 386–7 and discussion in 2.7 above, text to nn. 175–81.

¹⁰⁷ See *Ai.* 447–459, esp. *ἐπεγγελάωσιν* (they are laughing at me', 454), and *ἐχθαίρομαι, μισεῖ* . . . *ἐχθεῖ* ('I am hated, loathed . . . detested', 458–9).

¹⁰⁸ See *Ai.* 460–6, *Il.* 9. 356–67, 393–400; and above 2.7, text to nn. 156–8; 2.8, text to nn. 196–8.

¹⁰⁹ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 82–3.

¹¹⁰ On the former point, see n. 111 below; on the latter, see 1.3 above, text to nn. 120–5, 149–54.

about the Atreidae's general way of treating their *philoî*, as these lines explain:

if Achilles were alive and in the position of deciding about the arms, no one else would have obtained them rather than me. But, as things are, the Atreidae secured them [*ἔπραξαν*] for a man of unscrupulous character, dismissing my achievements in war [*κράτῃ*]. [But if madness had not presented my reprisal] . . . they would never again have given judgement in this way on another man. (442–9)¹¹¹

This point, stated in the first part of the speech, needs to be borne in mind in considering the role of Ajax's father, Telamon, in his subsequent deliberations (470–2). In part, Telamon represents what Williams calls the 'internalized other', the projected figure (like Polydamas for Hector in *Iliad* 22) before whom the agent feels that he is right to feel ashamed.¹¹² But Ajax's shame needs to be seen, in context, not simply as a response to his failure to bring home 'the garland of fame' (*στέφανον εὐκλείας*, 465). It is the fact that this failure embodies an *unjustified* humiliation, and one that Ajax has proved unable to avenge, that makes it imperative to make a gesture to show his father he is not, by nature, lacking in 'guts' (*φῦσιν* . . . *ἄσπλαγχνος*, 472).¹¹³ The gesture of dying in an isolated assault on Troy (and thus doing something 'worthwhile', *chreston*, in the process) is rejected on the grounds that it would 'give pleasure to the Atreidae' (469)—that is, it would presuppose a framework of reciprocal risk-taking that is no longer intact.¹¹⁴ He is thus faced with the Achillean 'choice of lives' (as presented in *Iliad* 9 and 18), but

¹¹¹ The claim that Achilles himself would have judged in Ajax's favour (442–4) is endorsed, in effect, by Odysseus himself in 1338–41, as well as by Teucer's stress on Ajax's well-known acts of exceptional bravery (1266–87), which he presents as meriting special gratitude (*charis*), 1267, as well as, by inference, the award of the arms. Cf. Achilles' complaints about the lack of reciprocity (including *charis*) in his humiliation (*Il.* 9. 315–37, discussed in 2.7 above, text to nn. 140–6). Note also *Ai.* 448–9: Ajax would have wanted to stop them securing decisions in the case of someone else in *this way* (*ὥδ'*), i.e., as he sees it, unfairly, and with manipulation. Cf. the way in which Achilles presents his own unfair treatment as a cautionary example and warns his fellow-chieftains against other such offences against reciprocity (*Il.* 9. 369–72), taken with 2.7 above, text to nn. 156–7. These points underlie Ajax's subsequent statement about *philia* and its abuse (678–83), discussed in text to nn. 136–40 below.

¹¹² See 1.3 above, text to n. 125; and, on *Il.* 22. 99–110, 1.4 above, text to n. 188. See also Williams (1993), 84–5; Cairns (1993), 231.

¹¹³ This is to read 460–6, 470–2, as picking up the theme of 434–49, discussed in text to n. 111 above.

¹¹⁴ On a context of trust as a necessary basis for the 'generalized reciprocity' of mutual risk-taking, see 2.6 above, text to nn. 130–3.

with none of the options which are open to Achilles.¹¹⁵ So the only way for him to realize the Achillean goal of being noble (*eugenes*) is to 'die honourably' (*καλῶς τεθνηκέναι*) if he cannot 'live honourably' (473–80); that is, to make the exemplary gesture of killing himself, when all other (honourable) options have been foreclosed.

Tecmessa's speech, as is often noted, is framed as a counter-argument to the ethical reasoning deployed in Ajax's deliberations.¹¹⁶ Her speech suggests that the ethical grounds which, in Ajax's view, require him to make the exemplary gesture of killing himself should be seen rather as requiring him to remain alive and defend his *philo*i. He will be disgraced by the life of slavery that he leaves for his wife and son (rather than by the failure to avenge his humiliating treatment by the Greeks).¹¹⁷ He should feel shame at the prospect of failing to protect his aged father and mother as well as his wife and son (rather than at that of failing to show his father that he can respond to his maltreatment through an exemplary gesture).¹¹⁸ His failure to match his spear-bride's willing co-operativeness as a partner (rather than his failure to penalize, or dramatize, his fellow-chieftains' humiliation of him) will show a failure in nobility (*eugeneia*).¹¹⁹ The general form of her appeal is similar to that of Ajax in *Iliad* 9: namely that the other's sense of shame and concern for his *philo*i should outweigh the considerations that lead him to give priority to expressing his sense of outrage.¹²⁰ On the view of Ajax's position offered here, Tecmessa's counter-argument engages more directly with Ajax's ethical stance than it does on most inter-

¹¹⁵ In *Il.* 9, Achilles talks as if going home is an honourable option for him (356–67, 393–416); contrast *Ai.* 460–6; in *Il.* 18, 95–100, Achilles chooses the course of action that will lead to his death, but which will also enable him to engage honourably in battle to avenge his *philos*; contrast *Ai.* 466–70.

¹¹⁶ See e.g. Winnington-Ingram (1980), 29–30; Blundell (1989), 74–7; Cairns (1993), 233–4.

¹¹⁷ Cf. 494–505 (esp. 'disgraceful', *aischra*, 505), with 434–56, 470–80 (esp. 'will laugh at', *ἐπὶ γέλωσιν*, 454, and 'disgraceful', *aischron*, 473).

¹¹⁸ Cf. 506–13 (esp. 'feel a sense of shame', *aidesai* . . . *aidesai*, 506–7) with 434–40, 460–6, 470–2.

¹¹⁹ Cf. 490–5 (the *sun*-compounds in 491, 493, signify her willing co-operativeness in acting like a proper wife, though she is the prize of his spear); and cf. 514–23 with 442–56 (taken with n. 111 above). The appeal to the obligation built up by the performance of willing (or 'gratuitous') acts of favour (see esp. 522, 'it is favour which always generates favour', *χάρις χάριω γὰρ ἔστιν ἢ τίκτουσ' ἀέτ*) recalls the ethical grounds of Achilles' complaints (see esp. *Il.* 9, 315–45) despite the difference in the kind of *philia* involved. Cf. also *Ai.* 479–80 with 524, summing up her argument.

¹²⁰ Cf. *Il.* 9, 628–32, 638–42 (esp. 'feel a sense of shame', *aideisai*, 640) with *Ai.* 490–5, 506–13, 522–4. See also 3.3 above, text to nn. 65–7.

pretations. If Ajax's suicide is taken as a protest against his fellow-leaders' breach of co-operative *philia* (and not simply at the loss of status involved in the failure to win the arms), then Tecmessa's appeals to refrain from suicide in response to the claims of *philia* is one to which he has good reason to respond.¹²¹

On the face of it, Ajax makes no direct reply to Tecmessa's argument; but I think that his speech to his infant son (545–82), and still more, the 'deception-speech' (646–92) are best understood as constituting such replies. In the first speech, Ajax maintains, in effect, that he can satisfy some at least of the claims on his *philia* which she specifies without giving up his exemplary gesture and the principles this expresses. He will leave his brother Teucer, 'as a guardian gate-keeper' (562), for his son, and one who will take the boy home to Ajax's parents to 'nourish their old age' (570). However, he also makes it plain that he wants his son to perpetuate his own 'savage laws' and 'nature' (*phusis*), and to show his enemies 'the kind of father he has been bred from'; if these conditions are fulfilled, his son would be 'no coward' (*ou kakos*, 548–9, 551, 557). The context, and a reference to the divisive contests over the arms of Achilles (which he will not allow to happen in the case of his arms, 572–7) make it plain what kind of 'enemies' he has in view and what kind of attitude and character he wishes his son to perpetuate. After Ajax's exemplary self-killing, his son is to perpetuate the stance of justified hatred and the 'nobility' expressed in his suicide.¹²² But, at the same time, the son, together with Teucer, is to satisfy the claims on Ajax's *philia* which Tecmessa has put forward. However, as a response to Tecmessa's counter-argument, this speech of Ajax is incomplete in certain respects. It is silent on Tecmessa's claim that Ajax should reciprocate her willing partnership by staying alive to protect her, and, more generally, that 'nobility' requires him to defend his *philo*i in this way.¹²³ The 'deception-speech' can be seen as returning to these questions.

Those scholars who see the speech as not being designed primarily to deceive its listeners tend to regard the speech as, in form

¹²¹ See text to nn. 105–15 above, esp. n. 111.

¹²² See the conception of Ajax's nature (*phusis*), and of the 'nobility' expressed in his suicide, in 470–80, discussed in text to nn. 113–15 above.

¹²³ The only reference to Tecmessa in Ajax's speech in 545–82 is the passing comment that their son's blissful ignorance of his situation, during infancy, will be a 'joy' (*χαρμονίην*) to his mother (558–9). The speech also underemphasizes, though not ignoring totally, the problem of Teucer's current absence (563–4).

and in substance, a soliloquy. They see this soliloquy as expressing the kind of heroic individualism that gives little weight to the claims of the *philoï* of the hero to pity and protection. Mary Whitlock Blundell, for instance, describes Ajax as 'rejecting the values of others without confronting them or engaging them in argument, which would undermine his self-sufficient isolation' (1989, 84). She refers to Knox's characterization of this speech as a soliloquy, a characterization which reflects Knox's conception of the hero as one who, typically, makes no response to the appeals of others, whether they plead for pity and protection or urge self-control and 'good sense'.¹²⁴ R. P. Winnington-Ingram also sees the speech as 'the supreme—ironic—revelation of the mind of Ajax through the expression of its reverse', a mind which Winnington-Ingram sees as being marked by a type of heroism that amounts to 'megalomaniac pride'.¹²⁵ I follow these scholars in reading the speech as reflecting Ajax's reaffirmation of his decision, and also as expressing, in reflective and 'philosophical' mode, the grounds underlying this decision.¹²⁶ (It is this speech, rather than the earlier deliberative monologue, 457–80, which contains the general, 'second-order' reasoning that I see as characteristic of epic and tragic problematic heroes.)¹²⁷ But I do not share their view that the speech is best understood as one in which Ajax, in essence, speaks only to himself, and in which he makes no response to Tecmessa. Indeed, I think that the speech expresses the type of conflict between the reaffirmation of an exemplary gesture, and the principles underlying this, that we also find expressed (in different ways) in *Il.* 9. 645–8 and *Med.* 1021–80.

I take Ajax's reference to his wife early in the speech (though

¹²⁴ See Blundell (1989), 84 n. 123; and Knox (1979), 12–14, 20–3, also (1964), 18–24, 46–7, 51–2 (the last ref. dealing with Achilles). However, as noted in 3.3 above, text to nn. 65–7, the distinction between appeals to 'good sense' and to pity can be crucial in determining the response of problematic heroes such as Achilles. Knox's reference to Schadewaldt's *Monolog und Selbstgespräch* (1926), in (1979), 156 n. 74, is significant, in that Knox's view perpetuates the Romantic connection between soliloquy and heroic 'inwardness' implied in Schadewaldt's book. See further *Introd.*, text to n. 38, and Snell (1964), 56, discussed in 3.5 below, text to n. 152.

¹²⁵ Winnington-Ingram (1980), 47 n. 109, and 41 (also 47–56); and, on this latter idea, see text to nn. 145–8 below.

¹²⁶ See Knox (1979), 135–44; Winnington-Ingram (1980), 54–5.

¹²⁷ Although the Iliadic deliberative monologues sometimes allude to the long-term goal of the kind of life and character implied in the decision (see e.g. *Il.* 11. 408, taken with 1.2 above, text to nn. 82–8, 1.3 above, text to nn. 131–2, 144–8), they do not normally serve as vehicles for the kind of second-order, reflective reasoning described in 2.6 above, text to nn. 125–6.

third-personal in form) as an indication that the speech is addressed to her claims, and especially to her appeal that he show pity for his wife and son, who will be left unprotected by his proposed suicide (652–3). However, at the same time, he indicates what it would mean, ethically and emotionally, for him to accede to her appeal, and to adopt the conception of 'nobility' (*eugeneia*) that she urges on him. To gauge the significance of his comments, we need to take account of the tone of the relevant lines, which is not only reflective but also bitterly ironic and overstated, a tone which recalls parts of Achilles' great speech in *Iliad* 9.¹²⁸ 'I, who at one time was terribly tough [*ἐκαρτέρον*], like tempered steel, have been womanized in my speech [*ἐθελύνθην στόμα*]'¹²⁹ by this woman here; I feel pity at the thought of her being left a widow among my enemies, and my child an orphan' (650–3). Ajax's expression of pity in 652–3 (which I take to be unironic) signals that he sees the force of Tecmessa's appeal for pity in her speech (510–15) and thus, by inference, her presentation of the response to this appeal as constituting 'nobility'. But the preceding lines make it plain that he would need to become 'a woman' to make the response, and to accept the norm of nobility, that she urges on him; and, given his attitudes to masculinity and femininity, as expressed already, it is clear how unacceptable this would be to him.¹³⁰

A similar point applies to this notoriously over-stated assertion: 'In future, then, I shall know how to yield to [*εἵκειν*] the gods, and to worship [*σέβειν*] the Atreidae. They are rulers; and so one must submit to them [*ὑπεικτέον*]' (666–8).¹³¹ Tecmessa's speech had failed to explore what it would mean, in practical or in ethical terms, for Ajax to be allowed to continue to act as the protector of his *philoï*, after his failed attack on the Greek leaders. Ajax here gives a graphic,

¹²⁸ Cf. esp. *Ai.* 650–1, 666–8, 677–82, discussed in text to nn. 130–6 below, with *Il.* 9. 315–22, 336–41, 356–63, 406–26. (See further 1.3 above, text to nn. 131–2, 144–8.) The effect of these lines, taken with the hints of Ajax's suicide (654–65, 684–92) must also colour the tone of the reflective generalizations of 646–9, 669–76.

¹²⁹ *στόμα* signifies both 'speech' and 'edge' (continuing the simile of the sword): see Winnington-Ingram (1980), 48, n. 111; and Kamerbeek (1953), ad loc.

¹³⁰ See *Ai.* 293, 586 (also Blundell (1989), 77–8), and the strongly male-centred conception of shame and nobility implied in 434–40, 460–6, 545–59, in which the dominant norm is that of the father as ideal or 'internalized other'. For a different reading of the lines (by reference to mystery cults) which seeks to explain why Ajax says not only that he *would* become a woman (if he did as Tecmessa asks) but that he *has* become one, see Seaford (1994b), 282–4.

¹³¹ On the pointed reversal of the expected phraseology, 'worship the gods and yield to the Atreidae', see e.g. Winnington-Ingram (1980), 49.

but not wholly implausible, picture of what this would involve. At the same time, the strong language that he uses (taken against the background of Ajax's earlier assertions about what 'nobility' requires) indicate how unacceptable this course of action would be to him.¹³² The same point applies to his rhetorical question: 'How shall we fail to learn to be self-controlled [*sophronein*]?' (677).¹³³ Tecmessa had not couched her appeal to him in the form of an appeal to him to be *sophron*, or with the stance often associated with this appeal, that of advising the other to control his emotions in what the speaker presents as being in his own best interests.¹³⁴ But Ajax signals here that acceding to the course of action that she urges on him would involve his becoming 'self-controlled' or 'sensible' in that sense; and that this is unacceptable to him. It is the more so since being *sophron* in this way, and in this context, would seem also to have the connotation of submitting to another's judgement and authority which it sometimes has elsewhere in this play.¹³⁵

Ajax's rhetorical question should be taken closely with the following lines: 'I have just learned to hate an enemy as much as is compatible with his becoming a friend again, and to want to help and benefit a friend as much as is compatible with his not remaining one always' (678–82). I take it to be clear that Ajax is repudiating the kind of 'sensible' response embodied in these lines, one that he regards as the concomitant of agreeing to Tecmessa's request. Ajax's adherence, thus signalled, to the values of friendship and enmity is sometimes taken as indicative of an ethical attitude which the play presents as being limited and rigid, and one that is, in any case, undercut by Ajax's own recent attack on his (former) *philoi*, the Atreidae and Odysseus.¹³⁶ Although it would be an over-simplification to suggest that the play validates totally Ajax's ethical attitude,

¹³² For the attitudes of the Atreidae to Ajax, see e.g. *Ai.* 1067–9, 1087–8, 1250–4. Thus, Ajax's use of 'worship' for the kind of response (abject supplication) that would be needed to enable him to be allowed to live may not be too wide of the mark. On Ajax's claims about what 'nobility' requires, see text to nn. 110–15 above.

¹³³ The line has the form of a generalizing plural ('we human beings'), like the alternating natural forces specified in 669–76; but the line clearly refers primarily to Ajax (cf. the plurals of 666–7, denoting Ajax), as is made explicit in 678.

¹³⁴ For *sophronein* used in this way see e.g. *Ai.* 1264–5, and, for cognate formulations, see Knox (1964), 12–13. See the appeals of this type by Odysseus and Phoenix in *Il.* 9 (see 3.3 above, text to nn. 57–63) by contrast with that of Ajax (text to nn. 64–7 above), which Tecmessa's appeal resembles.

¹³⁵ See *Ai.* 586, 1075, 1259; see further Goldhill (1986), 193–7, and, on the various senses of *sophron*, see Gill (1990a), 80.

¹³⁶ See e.g. Knox (1979), 128–9, 141–8; Blundell (1989), 85–8.

or the problematic acts which derive from this,¹³⁷ I think that the play does present this attitude as having ethical depth and consistency. The nub of his grievance against the Greek leaders, as I have suggested, is that their failure to award him the arms of Achilles is incompatible with the principles of fairness and reciprocity that should be present within a properly conducted *philia*. His attack on them constituted a protest at this breach in *philia*; and, though massively problematic, this protest is not unintelligible as an expression of adherence to those principles.¹³⁸ The failure of this protest means that, to stay alive, he would need now to come to terms with (or 'worship') friends who have, as he thinks, acted as enemies towards him; and also, in future, to maintain the kind of qualified (or false) friendship presented in these lines. Although, as his earlier comments indicate, to do so would meet the legitimate claims of his dependent *philoi* on his pity, this response, that of being 'womanized' in speech, is incompatible with 'nobility', as he understands this.¹³⁹ His following instructions to Tecmessa, 'to pray to the gods for the fulfilment of what my heart desires', and to his men, 'to tell Teucer, when he comes, to take care of me and to take thought [*εὐνοεῖν*] for you' (685–9), can be understood as a natural conclusion to the considerations by which he has, though obliquely, reaffirmed his original decision to kill himself.¹⁴⁰

On this reading, Ajax's 'deception-speech', like other speeches considered in this chapter, expresses the conflict between a deliberated exemplary gesture, based on reflection about general principles of co-operative living, and the more standard claims of *philia*, the validity of which are also recognized by the person concerned. The peculiar formal character of the speech is to be explained by reference to its role as an expression of this conflict. In *Il.* 9. 645–8,

¹³⁷ On the ethical complexity characteristic of the presentation of problematic heroes in the *Iliad* and Greek tragedy, see Ch. 2.

¹³⁸ See text to nn. 110–11 above and n. 111. Blundell (1989) goes some way towards acknowledging this point in 88–90. On the ethics of reciprocity, see 2.6 above, text to nn. 127–30.

¹³⁹ Thus, it is not quite right to say, as Blundell does (1989, 86) that 'Ajax's indignation at ingratitude is undermined by his treatment of his dependants'. Rather, there is an (acknowledged) tension between meeting the claims of his dependent *philoi* and carrying through his exemplary stance at the ingratitude of his fellow-chieftains; he chooses the latter course, but not in a way that negates the validity of the former.

¹⁴⁰ The lines can be seen as restating the position of 545–82, esp. 562–71, which are themselves an amplified restatement of the decision of 470–80. Thus, the speech as a whole is framed by an indirect (652) and direct (685–6) address to Tecmessa.

the conflict is expressed in a straightforward statement of the two claims which are involved, and in the reaffirmation (in my interpretation) of the claim of the exemplary gesture. In *Med.* 1021–80, the two claims are expressed, in part, in the two ‘voices’ with which Medea speaks in the course of the monologue. Again, the net result is the reaffirmation of the exemplary gesture, though this is not the note on which the monologue ends. In Ajax’s case, the two voices are, paradoxically, combined in the same lines. In the passages discussed earlier, Ajax *both* expresses the ethical claims on his *philia* made by Tecmessa *and* indicates, by his bitter and ironic, tone (as well as by the contrast with his previous speeches) his rejection of the compromises involved in meeting those claims. In this sense, his speech contains a kind of internal dialogue, as he both expresses and rejects those claims in favour of those of his exemplary gesture.¹⁴¹ It also continues, and terminates, his argument on this question with Tecmessa in the previous scene. In the event, it is clear that his meaning is not apparent to Tecmessa and the chorus (who, of course, desperately want him to meet the claims which Tecmessa states), and may not be fully apparent to the audience immediately, though it becomes clear when confirmed by the death-speech.¹⁴² None the less, the speech is still, I think, to be understood as, at a fundamental level, engaging in dialogue with Tecmessa’s position, and in this way contributing to the larger ‘dialectic’ about the nature of nobility and *philia* embodied in the play as a whole.¹⁴³

One element present in the other speeches discussed in this chapter but not, apparently, in the deception-speech is the use of psychological as well as ethical language to convey the complexity of the speaker’s state of mind and the stance taken (of self-distancing

¹⁴¹ See also Blundell (1989), 84: ‘he gives us precisely the arguments we might have expected from some other character trying to dissuade him from suicide’; and Winnington-Ingram (1980), 47 n. 109. However, we need also to recognize the extent to which he meets those arguments by his implied stance, as described in text to nn. 128–40 above.

¹⁴² See *Ai.* 807, 911–12, and 815–65. It does not follow from the misunderstanding of these figures that the audience is encouraged to see Ajax as trying to *deceive* them (why should he?). It is rather a matter of his debating within himself questions which they have raised but doing so at a level of generality and intensity which they cannot engage with, given their direct involvement with the outcome of his decision. See further Gill (1990b), 19–20; and, on the comparable question of whether Achilles’ (reactively involved) listeners understand his speech fully, 2.8 above, text to nn. 199–203.

¹⁴³ On the idea of Greek tragedies constituting a type of ‘dialectic’, see 2.4 above, text to n. 86.

or affirmation) towards the ‘parts’ or forces within himself which are activated by the conflict. There is no obvious equivalent for Achilles’ identification of the ‘swelling heart’, or Medea’s identification of *thumos* (‘spirit’), as the force which determines the priority of the exemplary gesture. However, the speech can be seen as having a significant role within the nexus of psycho-ethical language formed by the play as a whole. In the preceding choral ode, Ajax’s men describe him, repeatedly, as ‘mad’; and, as Winnington-Ingram has brought out, the ‘madness’ they have in view is not so much that which made him attack the animals (rather than the Atreidae) but rather that which makes him insist on killing himself after the failure of his attack, in spite of the pleas of his *philoï*.¹⁴⁴ The ‘deception-speech’ comes directly after this one; and it can be seen (within the play’s dialectic) as a kind of counter-argument to the characterization of Ajax’s state of mind offered by the chorus. What the speech shows is that Ajax is, in fact, capable of articulating the kind of attitudes that the chorus see as characteristic of ‘sanity’ and ‘good sense’ (being *sophron*), rather than ‘madness’.¹⁴⁵ However, as explained, he also indicates his rejection of what this kind of ‘good sense’ involves;¹⁴⁶ and he does so in a way that is thoughtful, though bitter, rather than passionate or ‘irrational’.¹⁴⁷ In this sense, we can say that his speech disputes their characterization of his state of mind as ‘mad’. In effect, he says, that, if he is ‘mad’ to kill himself, this is a type of madness that rests on rational reflection and deliberate choice.¹⁴⁸ Thus, the speech can be seen as contributing to a

¹⁴⁴ See *Ai.* 610–11, (‘living with [=afflicted by] divine madness’ [*θεία μανία ξύναυλος*]); 614–16 (‘now he is pastured in the solitude of his own mind [*φρενὸς οἰοβώτας*] and has proved a great grief to his friends’); 625–6, 639–40 (‘no longer does he abide firm in the temper to which he was bred [*συντρόφοις ὀργαῖς*] but keeps company outside it [*ἐκτὸς ὀμιλεῖ*]’), the latter phrase suggesting that he is ‘beside himself’, i.e. mad. See further Winnington-Ingram (1980), 32–8, also 42, whose translation I cite for 614–16, 639–40.

¹⁴⁵ The chorus do not themselves use *sophronein* as the opposite of ‘madness’ in 596–645; but the contrast between *sophronein* and *mania* seems to be signalled at 133 (see further Winnington-Ingram (1980), 20–1), and falls within the normal semantic range of *sophronein*.

¹⁴⁶ See esp. 677 (‘How shall we fail to be self-controlled?’, *sophronein*), and text to nn. 133–5 above.

¹⁴⁷ See text to nn. 126–8 above.

¹⁴⁸ Analogously, Achilles, in my view, reaffirms the response of the ‘swelling heart’ from which Phoenix tries to dissuade him (*Il.* 9. 553–4 and 646, taken with 3.3 above, text to nn. 83–4), and Medea, decisively, if not whole-heartedly, sides with the ‘plans’ that are the vehicle of her *thumos* (‘spirit’) in 1048–55, discussed in 3.5 below, text to nn. 164–8. On this pattern in heroic discourse, see Knox (1964), 17–18.

dialogue framed in psycho-ethical terms, even if it is not itself couched predominantly in those terms.

3.5 MEDEA'S SELF-MASTERING ANGER

The type of analysis offered in this chapter can also help us to frame an interpretation of another famous and controversial speech, Medea's great monologue (*Med.* 1021–80). Doing so can clarify the formal character and psychological thought-forms of the speech, as well as advancing the line of argument of this study.

As in the case of Odysseus' address to his heart (3.2 above), my reading of the speech can be defined by contrast with Snell's. For Snell, this speech represents a crucial stage in the historico-cultural development of the idea of the self-conscious 'I'. It represents the moment at which the person is sufficiently conscious of herself as a unified and autonomous entity to be aware of conflict *within the self* (as distinct from conflict between the 'I' and a quasi-autonomous force). 'Here, for the first time, a human being is so completely on his own that the only motive he knows for his action is his passion and his reflection.'¹⁴⁹ The terms in which Snell analyses the conflict are significant: 'passion' and 'reflection'; in place of the latter term, we find elsewhere 'sound considerations' or 'reasonable intentions' (1964, 52). The development which Snell seeks to trace is that of the idea of the person as an autonomous moral agent as well as a self-conscious 'I': As we have seen, Snell's understanding of what constitutes properly *moral* decision-making is Kantian in character. The terms of analysis reflect Kant's view that moral decisions express the kind of rationality that abstracts from emotions and desires (at least from those emotions and desires not validated by the universal principles recognized by the agent's rationality).¹⁵⁰ This understanding of morality promotes the contrast between (moral) 'reason' and (immoral, or at least non-moral) 'passion' that forms part of Snell's reading of this speech. Snell uses these terms in connection with the final lines of the monologue, which he translates in this way: 'I am overcome by evil and I realize what evil I am about to do, but my *thumos* [my agitation, my passion] is stronger than my *bouleumata* [sound considerations], that *thumos* which is to blame for the

¹⁴⁹ Snell (1964), 56, also 47–55; see further 1.1 above, text to nn. 20–5.

¹⁵⁰ See 1.1 above, text to nn. 29–34; 1.3 above, text to nn. 114–15.

greatest evils that men commit.'¹⁵¹ It is clear from his account that he regards these lines not simply as the final ones but as the crucial, or, as he puts it, the 'decisive', lines in the speech (1964, 52, also 55).

The interpretation of the speech offered here can be contrasted with Snell's on each of these points. Snell sees the significance of the speech as inhering in its presentation of individual isolation and self-consciousness, expressed, appropriately, in the mode of monologue, and, more precisely, soliloquy.¹⁵² I emphasize, by contrast, the fact that the speech is, in large part, couched as dialogue, in which Medea responds in a real (though sometimes oblique) way to those addressed, principally, her children.¹⁵³ Also, the speech as a whole, in both its dialogue and monologue sections, works out an ethical dilemma which derives from Medea's decision to make a stand of principle in her interpersonal dispute with Jason. The working out of this ethical dilemma generates certain striking types of self-identification and self-distancing, including Medea's distancing herself from the *thumos* that urges the infanticide (1078–80). None the less, ethical reasons, as well as feelings, underlie each of the positions that make up Medea's dilemma, including the position identified with *thumos*. Hence, the reason–passion contrast, as used by Snell, is a poor instrument for characterizing the alternative positions in her dilemma. Also, I see the 'decisive' lines as being those in which Medea reaffirms her decision to commit infanticide (1049–55), whereas the final ones (though, of course, striking and memorable) are limited to expressing the painful impact of this reaffirmation.

As stated already, I see the speech, like *Iliad* 9. 645–8 and Ajax's 'deception-speech', as centred on the conflict between a deliberated exemplary gesture, dramatizing Jason's breach of the fundamental principles of *philia*, and the more standard claims on her *philia* represented by the children. The structure of the speech expresses this conflict. Medea's response to the physical impact of the

¹⁵¹ *Med.* 1078–80; as translated in Snell (1964), 52, Greek terms transliterated. For a different translation, see text to nn. 179–80 below.

¹⁵² On this understanding of the significance of soliloquy, see 3.4 above, text to n. 124, and refs. in n. 124.

¹⁵³ *Med.* 1021–41 are addressed (though with veiled meaning) to the children, as are 1069–77; 1042–8 (and perhaps 1049–55) are addressed to the chorus, see the vocative, 'women', in 1043, and the echoes of her earlier exchange with the chorus (797, 816–18) in 1046–7, 1049–50. Thus, only 1065–9, 1078–80, and (if genuine) 1056–64 are actually monologue; and all these lines (except 1056–8) can be conceived as a continuation of the confidential address to the chorus in 1042–8.

children, and to the bonds of mother-son reciprocity underlying this impact, leads her first to repudiate her planned gesture, and then, in a counter-move, to reaffirm it. In the latter part of the speech, this sequence is partially replayed: the physical impact of the children, and their imminent loss, leads Medea to distance herself from her plans, now reaffirmed, but without repudiating them wholly.¹⁵⁴ The presentation of the conflict differs from the cases considered so far, in that Medea herself articulates the more standard type of ethical appeal (in her response to the children 1042-8) which, in the other cases, is expressed by others (by Ajax in *Iliad* 9, and Tecmessa in the *Ajax*). However, as we have seen, this move is anticipated partly by Ajax's 'deception-speech', in which Ajax indicates both the arguments against his exemplary gesture and the grounds for reaffirming this. Ajax does so in the same lines, by his bitterly ironic phrasing of the counter-arguments. But, in Medea's case, the conflict is expressed in the different voices, and to some extent, the different 'selves', which speak in the different parts of the speech.¹⁵⁵ The resulting dialogue between different voices has been seen, since Antiquity, as one of the most striking features of the speech.¹⁵⁶ None the less, a single line of argument runs through all, or at least most, of the speech, and it is one which derives from the type of ethical conflict just described.

In the discussion of the *Medea* in the preceding chapter, I cited the opening lines of Medea's speech, addressed to the children (1021-41), as an expression of the way in which human lives, with their finite time-span, can become deeply bonded by reciprocal acts of *philia*, and, thus, as an expression of the point that underlies Medea's exemplary vengeance through infanticide. I also noted the paradox that, in order to dramatize the offensiveness of Jason's failure to respect the significance of the bonding of human lives through *philia*, she herself chooses to sever the mother-child bond

¹⁵⁴ See *Med.* 1040-1, registering the physical impact of the children in 1021-39; 1042-8, repudiating the plans, and 1049-55, reaffirming them. Cf. 1069-76, registering the physical impact of the children, and distancing herself from, but not wholly repudiating, her plans in 1078-80. On 1056-64, see text to nn. 169-75 below.

¹⁵⁵ This is true in so far as the different phases of the speech, and the different positions adopted, involve certain types of self-identification and self-distancing. See Gill (1987), 25-31, and text to nn. 164-8, 176-84, 189-90 below; also Pucci (1980), 138-44, with the qualification made in n. 167 below.

¹⁵⁶ On Greek philosophical responses to the monologue, see Gill (1983a) and 3.6 below.

in this appalling way.¹⁵⁷ These lines are marked by the interlacing of 'I' and 'you' that is also a marked feature of Medea's speech in her *agon* with Jason, and that is notable by its absence from Jason's response ('I would have held *your* bridal-torch, *you* would have wrapped *me* in my shroud . . . *you* will live [as she pretends] deprived of a mother . . . I shall live, deprived of *you*, my children.').¹⁵⁸ These lines culminate in the agitated questions to the children ('Why do you gaze at me with those eyes, children? Why do you smile your last smile at me?' 1040-1) which generate the crucial internal debate of 1042-55, in which she first repudiates, and then reaffirms, her exemplary gesture.¹⁵⁹

The internal debate of 1042-55 is couched, on the face of it, solely in terms of carrying out a mode of vengeance which will maximize Jason's pain, without explicit reference to the larger principles which, in my view, underlie her revised choice of a mode of vengeance.¹⁶⁰ However, the suggestive opening lines of the monologue give a larger significance to the arguments for and against her vengeance,¹⁶¹ and those arguments also resonate against other key lines in the larger dialectic of the play. When Medea asks herself why she should suffer twice as much in order to give pain to the children's father, and answers that she will not be humiliated by letting her enemies go 'unpunished' (*ἀζημίους*), the question and answer gain significance from their role in this larger dialectic. Implicit here is the calculation that it is 'worth' her pain to dramatize Jason's breach of reciprocity in *philia* by the kind of pain she imposes.¹⁶² Also, like Achilles and Ajax before her, Medea's

¹⁵⁷ See 2.9 above, text to nn. 265-7.

¹⁵⁸ See the reiterated interlacing of 'you' and 'me' in 1021-2 (*σφῶν* . . . *ἐμὲ*); 1024-5 (*ἐγὼ* . . . *σφῶν*); 1029 (*ὑμᾶς* and understood *ἐγὼ*); 1033 (*ὑμῖν* . . . *ἐμὲ*); 1036-8 (*σφῶν* . . . *ἐμοί* | *ὑμεῖς*). My translation gives the gist of 1025-7, 1032-4, 1023, 1036-7, in that order. On comparable language in the *agon*, see 2.9 above, esp. nn. 232, 245, 254.

¹⁵⁹ This internal debate stands at the centre of the speech, flanked (if we ignore lines 1056-64) by the partly similar sections 1021-41 and 1065-80.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. 1046-7, 1049-50 with 797, 817; on the latter passages, see discussion in 2.9 above, text to n. 211.

¹⁶¹ e.g. the point that to be deprived of the type of parent-child reciprocity specified in 1021-39 is *kakon* (1046-7), i.e. bad for the parent as well as the children, seems to be part of what Medea tries to bring home to Jason by her exemplary killing: see 2.9 above, esp. text to n. 280.

¹⁶² See esp. 1360-2: Medea: ' . . . I've reached your heart, as is right.' Jason: 'But you yourself are pained and are a partner in troubles [*κακῶν κοινωνός*].' Medea: 'Grasp this firmly; it relieves my pain [or, 'my pain gives profit', *λύει δ' ἄλγος*], if you are not able to laugh at me.' On the final *agon*, within which this exchange falls, and on its significance in the play's dialectic, see 2.9 above, text to nn. 272-81.

'humiliation' is not just a matter of being worsted in status, but also of her being worsted in a way that she sees as unjustified and, indeed, deeply offensive by proper standards of *philia*, thus validating the 'punishment' that she imposes on him, and the 'sacrifice' that she makes of the children for this purpose.¹⁶³

Thus, the ethical conflict expressed in the internal debate of 1042–55 can be understood as being between the recognition of a standard ethical claim (the claim of the children on Medea's *philia*) and that of Medea's exemplary gesture. The patterns of self-identification and self-distancing in the lines reflect the character of this conflict. For Snell, the conflict lies between the 'passion' which urges her to commit infanticide and the 'sound considerations' which oppose this.¹⁶⁴ However, the interpretation offered here suggests a different way of understanding Medea's psycho-ethical division. In relation to Medea's deliberated and ethically grounded objectives, the desire to spare the children and to reject her plans represents the more 'impulsive' and (in a sense) 'unreasonable' desire. It represents the equivalent of Odysseus' impulse to kill the women-servants right away, as well as the response of Achilles and Ajax to the claims of their feelings made by their *philoî*.¹⁶⁵ The fact that this response leads her to distance herself twice from her 'plans' (1044, 1048) is significant in this respect. By this stage in the play, the term 'plan' (*bouleuma*) has come especially to signify both Jason's one-sided mode of planning and also, paradoxically, the one-sided planning by which Medea seeks to dramatize the ethical offensiveness of Jason's mode of planning.¹⁶⁶ Thus, for Medea to abandon these plans is to

¹⁶³ On Achilles, see 3.3 above, text to nn. 68–85 (noting, esp., the ref. to 9. 386–7, text to n. 85); on Ajax, see 3.4 above, esp. text to nn. 110–13. Medea describes the children's killing as a 'sacrifice' in 1054 (contrast 796); on the possible basis in ritual for this description, see Pucci (1980), 132–3. The use of the term 'punishment' in this connection may seem question-begging; Mackenzie (1981), 10–17, 67, 88, reserves 'punishment' for reprisals which are authorized by judicial institutions, and not taken by interested individuals. But the fact that Medea (on my view) sees her vengeance as validated by Jason's breach of general principles of *philia* arguably confers on her vengeance an analogous status to that of (exemplary) punishment by an institution, a point which also applies to Achilles and Ajax.

¹⁶⁴ Snell (1964), 52, cited in text to n. 151 above: Snell is referring specifically to 1079–80, but the point would also apply to the conflict expressed in 1042–55.

¹⁶⁵ See *Od.* 20. 9–21, and 3.2 above, concluding para.; *Il.* 9. 645, and 3.3 above, text to nn. 65–85; 3.4 above, text to nn. 122–30.

¹⁶⁶ See *Med.* 567, 772, 886, 893 (Medea pretends that her 'plans' have now been brought into line with Jason's). See also 2.9 above, text to nn. 244–5, 265; Foley (1989), 64–5.

give up the ethical stance and objectives that are central to her role in the argument of the play. Thus, her subsequent reaffirmation of those plans and the mode of 'punishment' and 'sacrifice' that they involve (1049–50, 1053–4), together with the disowning of the 'cowardly self' (*τῆς ἐμῆς κάκης*) that allowed such 'soft argument into my mind' (*μαλθακοὺς λόγους φρενί*, 1051–2) is wholly understandable.¹⁶⁷ This reaffirmation, while appalling in its consequences (to Medea as well as to us), represents the more 'reasonable' position in the debate, in the sense of the one that is more firmly grounded on reflectively-based deliberation.¹⁶⁸

The lines following Medea's reaffirmation of her plans (1055–64) present several acute problems of sense and interpretation, which have been much discussed in recent years, and have led some scholars, such as David Kovacs (1986), to treat them as post-Euripidean interpolation.¹⁶⁹ The most obvious problem is that, after appealing to herself not to kill the children but to take them with her to Athens ('there', *ἐκεῖ*, 1058), she replies by affirming that she must kill the children herself rather than have them killed by enemies (1059–63); and her enemies, presumably, are *here*, in Corinth. There is a further problem in seeing why Medea rejects the idea of sparing the children for this new reason (to avoid their being killed by others) rather than for the reason just restated (the fulfilment of her revenge plan with its larger ethical implications).¹⁷⁰ It is true that this new reason is couched in a form which is consistent with her general stance: to have the children killed *by her enemies* would be to add a

¹⁶⁷ Pucci (1980), 136–41, also 97–9, 152–4, thinks that, because Medea has a long-term plan, the debate in 1042–80 and the shifts in self-distancing and self-identification are nothing more than the expression of 'the maneuver of self-pity' (p. 137). But this does not follow; the conflict of 1042–55 is a real one (i.e. based on competing ethical claims, the validity of which Medea recognizes) even if Medea's long-term plan entails that preference be given to one position rather than another. Pucci's reading reflects his deconstructive mode of interpretation and his view of Medea's use of 'the rhetoric of self-pity' to mask its inner contradictions: see his pp. 16–17, 44–5, 72–7, 154–6.

¹⁶⁸ Rickert (1987) also stresses that Medea has powerful ethical grounds for killing the children (as an appropriate punishment for perjury, 106–13), in spite of the conflict of values and feelings that this generates (114–16).

¹⁶⁹ M. D. Reeve (1972) and Diggle (1984) excise the whole of 1056–80; but I accept Kovacs's arguments against doing so: see further Gill (1987), 25–6.

¹⁷⁰ This new motive is introduced, more plausibly, after the messenger-speech, which brings more urgency to the situation. The fact that 1062–3 = 1240–1 and that the lines fit better in the later context lends support to the idea that 1056–64 (or at least 1059–63/4) have been supplied on the basis of the later passage. On the problem of translating 1064 in an intelligible way, see Kovacs (1986), 346–7.

new twist to her unjustified humiliation. Also, her role in pre-empting this humiliation by killing the children herself, seems, to judge from her oath to the avenging Furies, to be conceived as having a kind of religious force.¹⁷¹ However, there remains the problem of seeing why she needs to introduce any new reason for infanticide at all at this point.

The only possible explanation seems to be that she is so appalled by the nature of her own vengeance-plan (a reaction expressed in the urgent self-address of 1056–8) that she needs to find a fresh argument, with a 'clinching' impact; and the necessity of the children's death (at someone's hands) is the one that she produces. I see no clear way of explaining the illogicality noted earlier,¹⁷² except that it may reflect the idea, which also appears in Greek philosophy, that psycho-ethical conflict can manifest itself in incomplete or dubious reasoning.¹⁷³ But the fact that such an explanation is needed highlights the fact that, in this part of the speech, unlike the rest, the line of argument is localized or strained, and does not turn on the central ethical conflict, which is so clearly articulated in 1042–55. Also, the type of self-distancing expressed in 1056–8 is more extreme than we find elsewhere in the speech, including the final lines, 1078–80.¹⁷⁴ These considerations lend support to the view of scholars such as Kovacs that the lines have been interpolated; and that the speech runs better if we go from 1055 directly to 1065.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Cf. 1060–1 with 1049 (also 797, 807–10), and cf. 1059 with 1054. The oath in 1059 seems to suggest that Medea will herself act as a (pre-emptive) Fury, punishing her enemies (who would otherwise kill her children), by killing them first (and so preventing them from doing so). See further Gill (1987), 29.

¹⁷² How does 1059–64 answer the appeal to take the children 'there', i.e. to Athens?

¹⁷³ See e.g. Arist. *NE* 7. 3 (on *akrasia*), esp. 1147^a14–^b17; and Charles (1984), 178–81. But the illogicality runs very deep. If the children can be saved (1056–8), they do not need to die. And, if they need to be killed to maximize Jason's pain (1046), they do not also need to die to avoid their being killed by the Corinthians. Foley (1989), 84–5 does not quite face the full force of the illogicality involved.

¹⁷⁴ 'Don't, spirit [*thumos*], don't do this; let them be, wretched one, spare the children; living there with me, they will give you joy'. The 'personalizing' of *thumos* (cf. *Od.* 20. 18–21, discussed in 3.2 above, text to nn. 29–30) and the allocation of dual functions (anger, pleasure) to *thumos* are not wholly unparalleled; see Gill (1987), 28–9, and Foley (1989), 69–71. But the self-division is still much sharper than in 1078–80, discussed in text to nn. 180–7 below, and less coherently related to Medea's central discussion: see Pucci (1980), 138–9. Aristophanes' *Acharnians* might be taken as parodying the self-address of *Med.* 1056–8 in lines 450, 480, 483, but is probably better taken as parodying the self-exhortation of *Med.* 1242–9.

¹⁷⁵ My agreement with Kovacs on this point does not mean that I share his conception of tragic 'heroism', adumbrated in (1986), 350–2, and (1980), 300–3, and

The last section of the speech (1065–80), by contrast, is readily intelligible as an expression of sorrowful resignation at the consequences of the reaffirmation of her decision to go through with the killing of the children.¹⁷⁶ This section constitutes a partial replaying of the first three stages of the speech (1021–41, 1042–8, 1049–55),¹⁷⁷ but with the difference that, after the reaffirmed decision of 1049–55, her response to the physical impact of the children, and to the ethico-emotional claim on her *philia* that this represents, is one of qualified self-distancing and not the total repudiation, followed by reaffirmation, found earlier.¹⁷⁸

It is in the light of this interpretation of the last section of the speech that I understand the meaning of the famous final lines:

καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,
θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσω τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,
ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.

As we saw, these lines form the basis of Snell's interpretation of the speech, and are understood by him in this way: 'I realize what evil I am about to do, but my *thumos* [my agitation, my passion] is stronger than my *bouleumata* [sound considerations], that *thumos* which is to blame for the greatest evils that men commit.'¹⁷⁹ The translation that I prefer is this: 'I know that what I am about to do is bad, but anger is master of my plans, which is the source of human beings' greatest troubles.' The relevant issues emerge more clearly in

developed at length in (1987), which seems to be informed by the limited view of shame ethics criticized by Williams (1993); see 1.3 above, text to nn. 121–4.

¹⁷⁶ Although 1021–80 is not to be understood quite as a deliberative monologue, of the Iliadic type (Medea is rather responding to a decision already made, announced in 791–810), its structure is similar to the deliberative monologues. The statement of the dilemma (1042) is followed first by the consideration of a course of action which the figure has some reason to adopt (1042–8) and then by its rejection (1049–55); this is followed in this case by a response to this rejection, and one which perhaps develops the note of resignation in ll. 11. 410 and 22. 130; see further 1.2 above, text to nn. 63–97.

¹⁷⁷ The image of herself and her children being set on different 'roads', which are painful for each of them (1067–8), picks up the earlier characterization of their future (1024, 1036–7). The (unbearable) impact of the children's physical presence is registered in 1070–6, as in 1040–4; but, whereas Medea says goodbye to her 'plans' in 1044 and 1048, in 1076 it is the children that she sends away.

¹⁷⁸ Thus, the attitude of 1236–40, in which she urges herself to bring her vengeance-plan to its conclusion, despite her countervailing love for the children (1247, 1250), is comprehensible as a continuation of the state of mind expressed in 1021–55 (and 791–819).

¹⁷⁹ Snell (1964), 52, cited above, text to n. 151.

Helene Foley's expanded translation: 'I understand what sort of bad things I am about to do, but my heart-determined-on-revenge [*thumos*] is master over my [revenge] plans, a[n avenging] heart that is generally the greatest cause of bad consequences for mortals.'¹⁸⁰ There are three principal differences between Snell's version and that of Foley and myself, and these carry large implications for understanding the attitude expressed in the lines. Like Foley, I think that *bouleumata* (1079) must be taken to be the revenge-plans dismissed and reaffirmed earlier in the speech, and not the 'sound considerations' or 'reasonable intentions' that Medea offers against these plans.¹⁸¹ Also, since the *thumos* ('spirit', 'heart', or 'anger') in 1042-9 seems clearly to be treated here as the agent of those plans,¹⁸² *kreisson* cannot have its usual meaning of 'stronger than' and must have its other possible meaning of 'is master over' or 'controls'.¹⁸³ Thirdly, *kaka* should not, in my view, be taken to denote moral 'evil', a notion closely associated by Snell with emotional 'agitation' or 'passion'. To say this is not to say that *kaka* is wholly devoid of ethical colour. But the primary sense of *kaka* in the preceding line (1077) and earlier in the speech (1046-7) seems clearly to be 'troubles' or 'sorrows'. In Medea's ethical outlook, to bring about 'troubles' for oneself as well as one's *philo*i is clearly, in some sense, 'wrong' as well as 'bad'. But it does not follow from this that *kaka* can be rendered appropriately as (moral) evils, as Snell does.¹⁸⁴

Underlying this difference over the interpretation of these famous lines are larger differences of intellectual framework. Snell, in his post-Hegelian picture of human civilization, sees these lines as the first expression in European culture of a crucial type of self-awareness: the consciousness of the conflict between reason and passion within a single, unified subject. Here as elsewhere, his post-Kantian assumptions shape his understanding of the conflict as one between morally guided rationality and the non-moral, or immoral,

¹⁸⁰ Foley (1989), 71, modified slightly.

¹⁸¹ See text to n. 166 above.

¹⁸² See *Med.* 1056 (if genuine), and Foley (1989), 68-70, countering A. Dihle's suggestion that *thumos* signifies 'maternal love'. For the use of *thumos* in connection with the feelings of anger prompted by humiliation and indignation, see *Il.* 9. 255, 386, 496, 595, 598, 629, 635; 3.3 above, text to nn. 58-68.

¹⁸³ See Diller (1966), whose interpretation is accepted by Stanton (1987) and Foley (1989), 68, though rejected by many other scholars, e.g. M. D. Reeve (1972), 59 n. 2; Kovacs (1986), 351 n. 12.

¹⁸⁴ See further Gill (1987), 30, n. 20; Rickert (1987), 95-6.

'agitation' of passion.¹⁸⁵ This reading implies, both that Medea, in these lines, repudiates wholly the 'calamitous passion' (p. 51) that is at work on her; and that her characterization of her state of mind in these lines is the crucial utterance in the speech, indeed, in the whole play.¹⁸⁶ In the contrasting reading of the speech, and of its concluding lines offered here, Medea's repudiation of her *thumos*, her motivation for infanticide, is partial, even in the concluding lines. Although 'she' distances herself from her *thumos*, the *thumos* is still acknowledged as the master of 'my' plans (*κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων*). In spite of the recognition of the 'badness' of the acts for which *thumos* is responsible (1079-80), this badness is presented as inherent in what 'she' intends to do.¹⁸⁷ The qualified character of her repudiation is related to the fact that, earlier in the speech, she has endorsed these same *bouleumata* and the motivation that underlies them, in spite of registering the force of the motherly claims that are also expressed here (1040-55). It is this endorsement that is the decisive assertion in the speech and the one which issues ultimately in action which Medea presents subsequently as justified.¹⁸⁸ Thus, in the larger context of the play it is the reaffirmation of her plans that counts as the 'reasonable' response, while these final lines express an intelligible (but subordinate) response to that reaffirmation.

If we compare this speech, taken as a whole, with the other passages considered in this chapter, it clearly exhibits more striking kinds, and variations, of self-identification and distancing than those other passages. The closest parallel, in this respect, is Odysseus' combination of identification with, and distancing from, his heart (*kardia*) in *Odyssey* 20, rather than Achilles' characterization of his heart as 'swelling with anger' in *Iliad* 9. 646, which I take as signifying a more straightforward reaffirmation of his anger.¹⁸⁹ However,

¹⁸⁵ See text to nn. 149-51 above; and, on Kant, 4.2 below, text to nn. 9-12.

¹⁸⁶ Snell (1964), 51-2, 54-5, esp. (p. 55): 'Medea's monologue culminates in this distinction [between 'passion and reason'] and this monologue is the gist of the whole drama.'

¹⁸⁷ Since 1078 ('what I intend to do is bad') already contains a sense of submission as well as agency, I see no reason to emend *δρᾶν μέλλω* ('I intend to do') to *τολήσω* ('I shall dare' and 'I shall undergo'), as e.g. Kovacs (1986), 351-2 and Foley (1989), 71 n. 36, wish to do.

¹⁸⁸ See 1236-50, and Medea's defence of her act in the final *agon* with Jason, discussed in 2.9 above, text to nn. 286-9.

¹⁸⁹ See above, 3.2, text to nn. 29-30, 47-50; 3.3, text to nn. 68-85.

Medea's monologue is closer to the other passages in the kind of conflict which gives rise to this special combination of self-identification and distancing. This is the conflict between a reflectively-based exemplary gesture and more standard ethical claims; and this combination of self-identification and distancing constitutes one of the ways in which the person concerned expresses this conflict and reaffirms the exemplary gesture.¹⁹⁰

3.6 GREEK POETIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL MODELS OF SELF-DIVISION

I conclude this chapter by taking up a question raised at its beginning, that of the relationship between Greek poetic and Greek philosophical models of self-division.¹⁹¹ The question that interests me most is whether or not there is any analogue in Greek philosophy for the kind of psycho-ethical conflict on which I have laid most emphasis (between the hero's reassertion of the reflectively based exemplary gesture and her recognition of conventional ethical claims);¹⁹² and, if so, whether Greek philosophers themselves show any awareness of this resemblance. It is by pursuing this question that we can see more clearly the significance of this topic for my larger project, that of defining the 'objective-participant' character of the model of personality which is, in my view, embodied in Greek poetry and philosophy. I do so, in the first instance, by considering the relationship between the poetic pattern and Greek philosophical analyses of psycho-ethical conflicts, such as *akrasia*. But, as becomes clear, it is open to question whether this is the area of Greek philosophical thinking where the most significant parallels are to be found.

The relationship between Greek philosophical thinking about *akrasia* and poetic patterns has been explored extensively in connection with one example in particular, namely that of Medea's monologue, especially 1078–80. There has been much debate on whether these lines (together with Phaedra's in *Hipp.* 373–90) form

¹⁹⁰ The conflict conveyed in *Med.* 1021–80 by self-identification and distancing is conveyed by Achilles in the adversative form of *Il.* 9. 645–8 and in *S. Ai.* 646–92 by the contrast between the surface, and the genuine, meaning of the lines, the latter indicated by the ironic phraseology.

¹⁹¹ See 3.1 above, text to n. 24.

¹⁹² See refs. in n. 23 above.

part of an argument between Euripides and Socrates about whether human beings are psychologically capable of acting against their own better judgement.¹⁹³ However, more helpful for my purposes is a discussion of the psycho-ethical significance of the lines in Galen,¹⁹⁴ which brings out clearly the extent (and the limits of the extent) to which Greek philosophers interpret such cases in the way that I have done here.

The question of how to interpret the significance of Medea's lines comes up in the course of Galen's criticism of Chrysippus' Stoic account of human psychology and of emotion or passion (*pathos*). Chrysippus argued for a strongly unified model of the human psyche, according to which emotions depended on (or, more strongly, *were*) beliefs. This reflected the standard Stoic view that human motivation is 'rational' in the sense that it involves 'assent' to rational (that is, verbal) impressions. To experience an emotion is to assent to a certain kind of impression, namely, the 'fresh' or newly formed impression that something is good or bad; to believe that it is right to react in a certain way; and to have the correlated psychophysical reaction.¹⁹⁵ Galen, on the other hand, argued for (what he took to be) the Platonic model of the psyche as a complex of rational and non-rational parts. Emotions such as anger and desires such as lust are functions of the 'spirited' (*thumoeides*) and 'appetitive' (*epithumetikon*) parts of the psyche, whereas beliefs and reasoning belong to the rational (*logistikon*) part.¹⁹⁶

This general difference issues in a radically different reading of the psychology of Medea's monologue. Galen takes it as the portrayal of

¹⁹³ Plato, *Prt.* 352b–357e is usually taken as providing relevant evidence for the approach of the historical Socrates; for the (supposedly) Socratic theory, see text to n. 221 below. On the question whether there was such a Socrates–Euripides debate, see e.g. Snell (1948), (1964), 47–69, Irwin (1983); for a review of the debate, see Rickert (1987), 91–105; for a re-examination of the relationship between Euripides, Socrates, and the sophists, see Evans (1994).

¹⁹⁴ Gal. *PHP.* 3–4; for specific passages, see nn. 197–8, 200–2 below.

¹⁹⁵ Gal. *PHP.* 4. 1. 14–2. 44, De Lacy, pp. 238–47. See also LS 65B, D, J, K; 1.2 above, text to nn. 68–9.

¹⁹⁶ Galen sees himself as maintaining the theory of Pl. *R.* 435c–444a (on which, see 4.2 below) and *Phaedrus* (*Phdr.*) 253c–256e, which he sees as consistent with the type of Stoic psychology maintained by Posidonius (on the latter, see LS 65I, K, N). The reliability of Galen's account of Posidonius, and of the latter's criticisms of Chrysippus, has been questioned by Fillion-Lahille (1984), 121–99, and Cooper (1998); see further Price (1995), 175–8. See also Gill (1998b) on the adequacy of Galen's reading of Platonic as well as Stoic psychology.

the struggle of reason (*logismos*) against anger (*thumos*) in Medea's psyche:

She knew what an unholy and terrible thing she was doing, when she set out to kill her children, and therefore she hesitated . . . Then anger dragged her again to the children by force, like some disobedient horse that has overpowered the charioteer; then reason in turn drew her back and led her away, then anger again exerted an opposite pull, and then again reason. Consequently, being repeatedly driven up and down by the two of them, when she has yielded to anger [she utters lines 1078–80].¹⁹⁷

Galen contrasts the process depicted with that presented in *Od.* 20. 18–21, a passage noted by Plato in connection with psychic division (*R.* 441b): 'she says that anger overpowers her reason, and therefore she is forcibly led by anger to the deed, quite the opposite of Odysseus, who checked his anger with reason.'¹⁹⁸

To understand Chrysippus' contrasting reading, which Galen reports, we need to be clear about the precise sense in which emotions (*pathe*) are 'rational' in Chrysippus' theory. They are rational in the sense that they involve (or are) beliefs, that is, assents to verbal impressions. But they are not rational (or, to mark the different sense, 'reasonable')¹⁹⁹ in the sense of being the beliefs that a perfectly reasonable, or 'wise' (*sophos*) person would have. They constitute *false*, and, in this respect, unreasonable, beliefs about what is really good; their falsity is sometimes conveyed by the idea that *pathe* consist in the 'rejection' or 'disobedience' of the reason-

¹⁹⁷ PHP 3. 3. 14–16, pp. 188–9 De Lacy, tr. De Lacy. For other comments on Medea's monologues which reflect Galen's interpretation, see 3. 4. 23–5, pp. 196–9 De Lacy; 3. 7. 14–15, pp. 214–15 De Lacy; 4. 6. 19–22, pp. 274–5 De Lacy. It seems clear from the refs. in n. 202 below, taken with PHP 4. 1. 14–17, pp. 238–9 De Lacy, that Galen is responding to Chrysippus' reading of Medea's monologue in the latter's book, *On the Passions*.

¹⁹⁸ PHP 3. 3. 17, tr. de Lacy; also 3.3.17–22, pp. 188–91 De Lacy. See also Pl. *R.* 390d, *Phd.* 94d–e; and 3.2 above, esp. n. 27. In fact, Galen's analysis differs from these Platonic passages (and from *Phdr.* 253–6) in being couched not just in terms of the interplay between psychic parts but also of a 'she' (*αὐτή*) who is dragged alternately by anger and reason. For some (partial) Platonic analogues for the latter formulation, see Gill (1983a), 145–6, n. 6; on Galen's psychological model in general, see Hankinson (1993).

¹⁹⁹ 'Reasonable' signifies the ethically normative use of rationality; see n. 16 above. This distinction cannot be drawn in quite this way in Greek, in which *logos* ('reason') and *logikos* ('rational/reasonable') carries both descriptive and normative significance. But the distinction is crucial in Stoic and other Greek theories and needs to be conveyed in other ways (though the fact that this distinction is involved is often missed); see further 4.2 below, text to n. 37.

ableness of which all human beings are constitutively capable.²⁰⁰ They are also *fresh* beliefs, and correlated with certain intense psychophysical reactions, such as 'shrinking' at a supposedly bad thing and 'swelling' at a supposedly good thing. The *pathe* is characterized as an 'irrational [that is, 'unreasonable'] and unnatural movement of the psyche and an excessive impulse [*horme*']'. It is compared to the movement of running rather than walking legs; the process of running involves human choice, but, when the movement gets going, it cannot be controlled in the way that walking can.²⁰¹

Chrysippus seems to have introduced these lines of Medea's into his discussion of *pathe* as an illustration of the difference between a mistake of judgement (*hamartema*) and an emotion or passion (*pathos*). Both states involve false, misguided beliefs, but it is only the *pathos* that also involves the affective features described in the preceding paragraph.²⁰² A related difference is that in the case of a *pathos*, though not a *hamartema*, conflict can arise between judgements (at least, between *some* judgements) and emotional responses. This occurs even though, in Chrysippus' theory, emotions too depend on beliefs or judgements. In some cases, the conflict derives from the fact that the belief causing the emotional response is not fully recognized by the person concerned (or that *change* in belief is not fully recognized). This generates conflict with beliefs that the person is aware of having.²⁰³ Medea's case represents a much starker type of conflict. Chrysippus' interest in her monologue (which is well-attested)²⁰⁴ seems to have centred on the fact that she is acutely

²⁰⁰ See LS 65J (= PHP. 4. 2. 10–18, pp. 240–3 De Lacy). The point that a rational animal naturally follows (normative) reason but sometimes disobeys or rejects it is one of the ways in which Chrysippus conveys the idea identified in n. 199 above. See also PHP 4. 2. 19–27, pp. 242–5 De Lacy; 4. 4. 16–18, pp. 254–5 De Lacy.

²⁰¹ See PHP. 4. 2. 1–18, including the quoted characterization of *pathos* in 4. 2. 8, pp. 238–43 De Lacy. See also LS 65A–D, J, K.

²⁰² PHP 4. 2. 24–7, pp. 242–5 De Lacy; also 4. 6. 19–22, pp. 274–5 De Lacy (also 4. 4. 23–8, pp. 256–7 De Lacy); I take it that the first two passages refer to the same passage in Chrysippus' work on the passions. I am grateful to Richard Sorabji for clarifying my understanding of the nature of this distinction.

²⁰³ This seems to be the core of Chrysippus' explanation for two kinds of case: (1) in which the affective reactions (e.g. crying in grief) occur (apparently) without the appropriate belief, and (2) in which the belief (apparently) persists but the affective reactions cease; see PHP 4. 7. 12–19, esp. 15–16, pp. 284–5 De Lacy, also n. 209 below.

²⁰⁴ On Chrysippus' special interest in *E. Med.* see Diogenes Laertius (DL) 7. 180, as well as refs. in n. 202 above. Although Chrysippus may have cited *E. Med.* 1078–9 only once, he seems to have given it a prominence which stimulated Galen's repeated responses (n. 197 above).

aware, and aware at the relevant time, of the fact that her emotional response derives from misguided beliefs. She is, thus, a particularly clear example of someone whose misguided action (as Chrysippus sees it) does not just derive from ethical (*hamartema*):

Medea, on the other hand, was not persuaded by any reasoning to kill her children; quite the contrary, so far as reasoning goes, she says that she understands how bad the acts are that she is about to perform, but her anger is stronger than her deliberations; that is, her affection [*pathos*] has not been made to submit and does not follow reason as it would a master, but throws off the reins and disobeys the command.²⁰⁵

Chrysippus' point here is not that Medea's response does not involve *any* rationality. It would be as true for him as it is for a later Stoic, Epictetus, that Medea's lines imply her assent to the impression that it is better to take vengeance on her husband than to save the lives of her children.²⁰⁶ But Chrysippus' interest here is not centred on this point, but on the way in which a passion can coexist with, and overcome, the awareness that the passion is based on a false or unreasonable judgement.

It is not Chrysippus' view that all passions are of this type. He seems also to have cited, in this connection, instances of 'blind', inarticulate rage, in which there is no such awareness.²⁰⁷ But Chrysippus seems to have been especially interested in the phenomenon represented by Medea, in which people persist in the passion, in spite of being aware of its unreasonableness. He comments, in this context: 'For that reason we can hear utterances of the following kind both in the case of lovers and persons with other violent desires, and of angry persons, that they want to gratify their anger and to let them be, whether it is better [*ἄμεινον*] or not.'²⁰⁸ Chrysippus' interest in such cases seems to be twofold. First, he is concerned to provide an explanation, within his unified psychological model,

²⁰⁵ PHP. 4. 2. 27, pp. 244–5 De Lacy; tr. De Lacy, 'evil' revised to 'bad'. This passage is not presented as quotation but as summary of Chrysippus; and the verb 'throws off the reins' (*ἀφηνιάζειν*) may reflect Galen's theory rather than Chrysippus', evoking the horse-charioteer image of Pl. *Phdr.* (see n. 196 above). But the key idea of 'disobeying' or 'rejecting' reason matches Chrysippus' quoted words in 4. 2. 10–12, pp. 240–1 De Lacy.

²⁰⁶ Epict. *Diss.* 1.28. 7–8; see further Long (1991), 114–15. See also text to n. 218 below.

²⁰⁷ PHP 4. 6. 43–6, pp. 278–81 De Lacy; also 4. 6. 9 and 19, pp. 272–5 De Lacy, taken with Gill (1983a), 144.

²⁰⁸ PHP 4. 6. 27, pp. 274–5 De Lacy, tr. De Lacy. See also 4. 6. 38–42, pp. 278–9 De Lacy.

for cases which, by the type of conflict that they exhibit, seem to challenge the validity of this model.²⁰⁹ Second, in such cases, the person directly involved articulates what Chrysippus sees as the key features of a *pathos*. Thus, when Medea says 'that she understands how bad the acts are that she is about to perform, but her anger is stronger than her deliberations', she is expressing, as well as embodying, two crucial features of a *pathos*. One is that it depends on a false, misguided belief; the other is that it involves an 'excessive' impulse, which can become out of control, like running (runaway) legs rather than walking ones.²¹⁰ As noted earlier, a *pathos* is sometimes characterized by Chrysippus as the 'rejection' or 'disobedience' of reason.²¹¹ This 'rejection' is not necessarily a conscious one (it is not so in the cases of 'blind' rage cited earlier); but in Medea's case, it is. She thus herself articulates this conception of what a *pathos* is, and also shows how human beings can recognize this fact and still be unable to resist the force of the *pathos*.

Galen thinks that the ambivalence, and perversity, exhibited in such cases can only be explained by the idea that there are two forces at work in Medea, her anger and her reason, and that she is (and is, presumably, aware of being) dragged in different directions by these.²¹² Chrysippus' view, by contrast, seems to be that it is only by taking into account the way in which human beings function as psychologically single (though not, therefore, simple) and constitutively rational animals that we can make sense of such cases. The rationality manifests itself in forming the kind of impression that implies a (verbal) judgement, and in assenting to the judgement in a way that triggers the intense psychophysical reaction that is characteristic of a *pathos*. In the kind of case represented by Medea, it also manifests itself in the retention of the assent, and of the associated affective state, in spite of the recognition of the false or unreasonable character of the judgement to which assent is given. Both these types of process are conceived as functions of a single (rational) psychological entity. Medea's case is unusual in the degree to which the unreasonable character of the *pathos* is accompanied by the recognition of this. But Medea is simply articulating what

²⁰⁹ See text to n. 203 above; Posidonius (a later Stoic) as well as Galen, questioned the effectiveness of Chrysippus' explanation. See LS 65 I, K, M–P; and for a reassessment of the ancient debate, refs. in n. 196 above.

²¹⁰ See quotation, text to n. 205 above, and text to nn. 200–1 above.

²¹¹ See refs. in n. 200 above.

²¹² See text to nn. 197–8 above.

Chrysippus would take to be true of all passions, including cases of blind rage: namely that they constitute a 'rejection' or negation of the reasonable response of which all human beings, as rational animals, are potentially capable.²¹³

Do these contrasting readings of *Med.* 1078–80 help us to make progress with the question raised earlier about the relationship between Greek philosophical models of self-division and poetic ones, as these have been analysed here?²¹⁴ As regards the psychological model (leaving ethical considerations aside, for the moment), Chrysippus' approach is clearly much closer to that adopted here than Galen's. Indeed, there is a clear analogy between the nature of the disagreement on this point between Galen and Chrysippus, on the one hand, and between Snell and myself. As in the reading of Medea's monologue offered in 3.5 above, Chrysippus sees Medea's conflict as one that occurs within a psychologically single, and constitutively rational, entity (rather than between a rational and a non-rational part).²¹⁵ Chrysippus' reading implies the thought that Medea *has a reason* for thinking that she should kill the children, in spite of seeing the reason for not doing so.²¹⁶ Also striking is the parallel between my view that Medea's conflict takes the form of self-identification and self-distancing (on the basis of what seems 'reasonable' to her) and Chrysippus' idea that Medea is a rational, and potentially reasonable, person who (consciously) 'rejects' the reasonableness of which she is potentially capable. Both readings accommodate, in their own way, the idea that Medea is a psychologically single, though complex, agent who generates and sustains her own self-division, as well as being aware of doing so.²¹⁷

²¹³ See further Gill (1983a), 140–1, 144–5. On Stoic thinking on *akrasia*, more generally, see LS 65G; M. Frede (1986), 97–8, 106–10; Nussbaum (1987), 155–8, (1994), 383–6; Gosling (1987), (1990), 48–68; Price (1995) 157–78.

²¹⁴ See text to nn. 191–2 above. There are two aspects to this question: whether Greek philosophical models of self-division correspond to poetic ones (as analysed here) and whether Greek philosophers recognize any such correspondence; in the case of these ancient readings of Medea, but not in all cases, these two aspects come together.

²¹⁵ See text to nn. 197–213 above and 3.5 above, esp. text to nn. 179–88. A relatively minor difference between Chrysippus' reading and mine is that he seems to read *κρείσσων* (*Med.* 1079) as 'stronger than' rather than 'master of', though the latter reading would fit better with his psychological model. See 3.5 above, text to n. 183, and text to n. 205 above.

²¹⁶ See text to n. 206 above and text to n. 218 below.

²¹⁷ See text to nn. 208–11 above; and 3.5 above, text to nn. 154–5, 176–8, 181–4, 187–8. See also Gill (1983a), 142–4.

However, as this summary of the parallels indicates, there are also differences between Chrysippus' reading and that offered earlier, as regards ethical considerations, and, relatedly, the psycho-ethical pattern identified. Although Chrysippus' reading, like Epictetus', must imply that Medea regards it as, in some sense, 'more beneficial' (*συμφορώτερον*) to take vengeance on her husband than to save the lives of the children, he does not lay stress on this point, or consider the factors that lead her to form this 'impression' or to 'assent' to it.²¹⁸ Above all, neither he nor Epictetus puts forward any idea that corresponds to the claim, central to my interpretation, that the vengeance seems 'more beneficial' as an exemplary gesture, based on reflective reasoning about the proper goals of a human life and about the place of *philia* within these. To this extent, a substantive difference remains between Chrysippus' reading and that offered here.

If we leave on one side, for the moment, the question of Greek philosophical responses to poetic presentations, how far should Chrysippus' picture of psychological (or psycho-ethical) conflict (rather than Galen's) be taken as representative of Greek philosophical thinking on this topic? Although the interpretation of the relevant material is not uncontroversial,²¹⁹ I think that the generalization made earlier is defensible. This is that psycho-ethical conflict is conceived, typically, in Greek philosophy as being that between two sets of belief-cum-reasoning, and the emotions or desires dependent on these, rather than between (wholly rational) will (or reason) and non-rational passion.²²⁰ Socrates' model (as presented in Plato's *Protagoras*) is, roughly speaking, one of a state of mind in which a short-term belief about what is good/pleasant is (incorrectly) given greater weight than a long-term, and better grounded, belief about this.²²¹ Analogously, Aristotle's famous analysis of *akrasia* in *NE* 7. 3 is couched, in a key passage, in terms of the competing claims of two (contrasting) sets of belief-cum-reasoning

²¹⁸ See refs. in n. 206 above. A similar point is made by Foley (1989), 72 n. 38; hence, the kind of analysis of the conflict given by Rickert (1987), 114–17, made in terms of a 'conflict of values', is not offered by Chrysippus.

²¹⁹ For a detailed analysis of the evidence and the issues raised, see Price (1995), also Gosling (1990), chs. 1–5.

²²⁰ See 3.1 above, text to n. 13. I do not defend this generalization here, but propose to do so elsewhere.

²²¹ See *Prt.* 352b–357e, taken with Gosling (1990), ch. 1, esp. 10–12; Price (1995), ch. 1, esp. 20–3.

about what is good or pleasant. It is true that Aristotle, at a crucial stage in his analysis, explains the ineffectiveness of one set of belief-*cum*-reasoning (the correct one) by reference to the psycho-physical impact of *epithumia* ('appetite' or sensual desire).²²² But there is no reason to leave out of account Aristotle's usual view that the desiring and emotional functions of human beings are constitutively capable of being shaped by beliefs and reasoning; thus, we do not need to suppose that *epithumia* here signifies a purely non-rational appetite or drive.²²³ Aristotle's analysis is more plausibly taken as being of someone whose patterns of desire are not *fully* shaped by the value-laden beliefs that the person, in some sense, holds. It is the *partial* failure of the relevant beliefs to inform the motivating process that is analysed in *NE* 7. 3, not the conflict between a wholly rational (and wholly reasonable) function and wholly non-rational appetite.²²⁴

Plato's *Republic* does not contain any equivalent full-scale analysis of psycho-ethical conflict. But it does contain a short account (439e–440e) of an example of unsuccessful self-control, analysed as the (ineffective) contest between the 'spirited' part of the psyche, acting in line with the rational one, and the appetitive part. On the face of it, this account expresses a pattern of the same general type that Galen uses to interpret Medea's conflict, namely as a conflict between a non-rational (and non-reasonable) part of the psyche and an (at least partly) rational (and reasonable) part.²²⁵ However, as explained in the next chapter, there are grounds for thinking that Plato's initial presentation of the model of the tripartite psyche in *R.* 4 underdescribes the degree of psychological (and psycho-ethical) cohesion that the theory involves. I think that the *Republic*'s theory requires that the appetitive part of the psyche should be, in principle, capable of being 'harmonized' with reasonable beliefs, and, to this degree, rational (and reasonable).²²⁶ Correspondingly, I take it that what is involved (439e–440e) is a conflict between aspira-

²²² See *Arist. NE* 7. 3, esp. 1146^a35–1147^a10, 1147^a24–^b17, esp. ^a31–^b3. I am assuming that there are two practical syllogisms involved; see further, e.g., Wiggins (1980b), 248–9.

²²³ See 4.2 below, text to nn. 15–31.

²²⁴ For this kind of interpretation of Aristotle's analysis, see e.g. Burnyeat (1980), 82–8; Rorty (1980a), 269–79.

²²⁵ On Galen's picture, see text to nn. 197–8; Plato's 'spirit' is partly rational in that it obeys the rational part rather than being identical with it (*R.* 440e–441a).

²²⁶ See *R.* 442c10–d1, 443d1–e2, and 4.2 below, esp. text to nn. 32–7.

tions²²⁷ which have been effectively informed by reasonable beliefs/reasoning and desires which (while, in principle, capable of being so informed) have not been so informed in this case. Thus, I think that Plato's example presupposes a model of psycho-ethical conflict that is much closer to Aristotle's analysis of *akrasia*, or Chrysippus' reading of Medea, than it is to Galen's model.²²⁸

This survey suggests that Chrysippus' model of psychological division, in which the conflict occurs within a psychologically single, and constitutively rational, entity, has more in common with other Greek philosophical accounts than is usually supposed.²²⁹ These other Greek philosophical accounts are not generally coupled with readings of poetic examples of self-division, in the way that Chrysippus' is.²³⁰ But the same general point made about Chrysippus' reading (considered in relation to the interpretation of the poetic examples offered here) also holds good for these accounts also. These accounts suggest, in different ways, that the person involved *has a reason* for desiring, feeling, and acting, as she does, even though this reason is in conflict with what she herself (in principle) sees as being the correct or *best* reason for acting. But, as my survey suggests, the accounts are not concerned to bring out the ethical basis for the incorrect reason, that is, to bring out why someone might think that it was right to act as she does (in spite of the reasons for not doing so). The thrust of the philosophers' interest is in providing a model which can explain how it is psychologically possible for someone to act in contradiction to her (ethically correct) beliefs.²³¹ In particular, no Greek thinker, in this kind of discussion, suggests

²²⁷ For the idea that the spirited part (*thumoeides*) is best characterized as the seat of aspirations, or of ethical ideals combined with the correlated feelings, see *Ch.* 4 nn. 36 and 93.

²²⁸ Although explicitly based on Plato's model, Galen's, arguably, differs from it in these crucial respects; see also n. 196 above.

²²⁹ The Stoic theory is more strongly differentiated from other Greek theories by e.g. Gosling (1990), 57–68, Price (1995), 157–78, also 3–7, though both studies underline some of the features that I see as uniting Stoic and other Greek theories.

²³⁰ For a partial exception, see *R.* 441b (text to n. 198 above); and, on the treatment by Plato and other Greek philosophers of Greek poetic presentation of psycho-ethical states, see text to nn. 240–2 below.

²³¹ The problem arises in this form in any psychological framework in which human beings are conceived as acting, feeling, and desiring on the basis of beliefs and reasoning; e.g. Davidson's accounts of *akrasia* in (1980), Essay 2, and (1982), start from a similar conception of the problem to that of the Greek theories, a point brought out in Gosling (1990), ch. 8, esp. 97–103. On the general relationship between Davidsonian action-theory and Greek philosophical psychology, see 1.2 above, text to nn. 42–53.

that the akratic desire or act should be understood as dramatizing reflective reasoning about the proper goals of a human life, in the way that I have.

This point can be put in another way, and one that clarifies the relationship between this question and my larger objectives in this book. At the start of this chapter, I identified three ideas that are central to the objective-participant conception of person, each of which are linked with different kinds of dialogue. These are: (1) that human psychological life centres on the interplay or 'dialogue' between parts or functions; (2) that ethical life is shaped and expressed by participation in interpersonal and communal discourse; (3) that reflective or dialectical debate constitutes the means by which human beings can properly determine the basis of this shared life.²³² The Greek philosophical accounts of *akrasia* (and psychological division generally) discussed so far centre on the connection between the first two ideas. They are concerned to analyse the psychological interplay (in particular, the internal conflict) of someone whose character has not been fully shaped so as to come into line with the norms of his ethical community. This point can be stated in this form (one which at least partly coincides with the Greek philosophers' characteristic way of presenting this matter). The internal dialogue which expresses conflict within the parts of the psyche reflects the fact that the person's belief-based desires have not been fully shaped so as to come into line with the action-guiding discourse of his ethical community.²³³ This is a different type of conflict from the one emphasized here, in connection with the poetic examples: namely between reflectively-based ethical reasoning and conventional ethical claims, and between the affective states which derive from these different ethical claims.

However, the kind of Greek philosophical accounts surveyed do not exhaust the contexts in which psycho-ethical conflict is discussed. A central interest in Greek ethical philosophy is that of the relationship between the second and the third ideas noted earlier.

²³² See 3.1 above, text to n.2.

²³³ For this form of analysis of *akrasia* and other such states, see text to nn. 224, 227 above. The presentation of psycho-ethical conflict as an internal argument is clearest in Pl. R. 439e-440a (cf. 441b); see also Arist. NE 1147^a31-4 and DA 432^b26-433^a3. On the presentation of human motivation in general (i.e. not just conflicted motivation) as a type of internal discourse, see 1.2 above, text to nn. 62-3. On the connection between internal discourse and interpersonal and reflective discourse, in Greek philosophy, see below 4.2, text to nn. 38-47, 54-6; 5.7, text to nn. 312-24.

Some of the central issues in Greek theory arise out of the question of the relationship between the norms of communal ethical discourse (whether in conventional or ideal communities) and those which are the outcome of reflective debate or dialectic.²³⁴ We sometimes also find the idea that the psycho-ethical state which has been shaped by properly conducted reflective debate is qualitatively different from that which has been shaped only by pre-reflective ethical discourse. This point is made explicitly in connection with Plato's normative psycho-ethical type in the *Republic*, that of the philosopher-rulers; and there are parallels in other Greek theories.²³⁵ Correspondingly, just as an issue sometimes arises in Greek philosophy about the relationship between pre-reflective and post-reflective ethical ideals, so an issue may arise about the relationship between pre-reflective and post-reflective psycho-ethical states.

In these respects, there may be conflict, or at least disparity, between the two types of ideal recognized by the relevant Greek philosophical theory. As Plato's *Republic* especially brings out, this disparity may generate conflict *within* the motivational patterns of the person concerned. It is a conflict of this general type that, I think, underlies Plato's (complex) presentation of the philosopher-ruler's attitude towards re-entering the cave.²³⁶ Although Aristotle generally presents the conflict in NE 10. 7-8 as that between competing ethical ideals rather than competing psycho-ethical states, the latter type of conflict is also implied by his characterization of the issue in terms of 'what each of us is'.²³⁷ Similar questions arise in the case of the relationship between pre-reflective and post-reflective psycho-ethical ideals in Epicurean and Stoic theory.²³⁸ It is, arguably, this aspect of Greek philosophical theory, rather than the analyses of psychological conflict surveyed earlier, that provides the context in which we may find the closest analogue to the kind of self-division emphasized in the poetic examples considered here. It is in this area that there arises the question of the way in which reflective (second-order) reasoning about the proper goals of a human life can generate conflict (including intra-psyche conflict) regarding the relationship between pre-reflective and post-reflective ethical norms and psycho-ethical states.

²³⁴ On this issue, see 4.3-7, 5.5-7, below.

²³⁵ See 4.6 below, text to nn. 186-8, 206-13.

²³⁶ See R. 519b-521b and 4.6-7 below, esp. 4.6, text to nn. 226-9, 243-9.

²³⁷ See 5.6 below.

²³⁸ See 5.7 below, text to nn. 325-64.

The philosophical versions of this conflict are, perhaps, less violent and extreme than the poetic ones. But they are, none the less, deeply problematic in their nature and implications.²³⁹

Whether the Greek philosophers themselves recognize this point of resemblance is open to question. Certainly, there is no explicit acknowledgement of this resemblance. Although Greek philosophers show considerable interest in poetic material that might be interpreted in the light of such a conflict; the tendency (in Plato, and the Stoics, for instance) is to interpret it as displaying (or as promoting) incomplete or defective ethical development.²⁴⁰ However, the position is less clear-cut than this last point might suggest. The question whether Greek philosophers recognize any resemblance between the kinds of psycho-ethical conflict identified in Greek poetry and philosophy forms part of the larger question whether they see any resemblance between the problematic heroes of the poetic tradition and their own psycho-ethical norms and the figures who exemplify these. Broadly speaking, Greek philosophers seem to have regarded the poetic heroes partly as cultural rivals to be replaced by their own norms, and partly as vehicles for ethical ideals that they wished to absorb or transform.²⁴¹ There is some reason to think that Greek philosophers had some awareness of the idea emphasized in Chapter 2: that the special status of the problematic heroes is linked with their role as vehicles of reflective reasoning about the proper goals and form of a human life.²⁴² Whether this recognition goes as far as seeing the kind of resemblance highlighted in the previous paragraph is more doubtful; and there may be special reasons why they do not pursue this point of connection.²⁴³

However, whether or not the Greek philosophers themselves see this resemblance, it is useful to highlight this resemblance in this

²³⁹ See 4.7 below, esp. text to nn. 290–2, in which I suggest that the philosophical version of this conflict is, in one respect, *more* problematic than the poetic one.

²⁴⁰ On the Stoics, see text to nn. 199–218 above, esp. text to nn. 214–18. On Plato see 2.2 above, esp. n. 26, and 4.7 below, text to nn. 294–300. (As indicated in 2.2 above, Aristotle offers a less ethically negative view of the poetic heroes.)

²⁴¹ For heroes as cultural rivals to be replaced, see e.g. Pl. R. 386a–392c, 603c–606d, Epict. Diss. 1.28; as vehicles of ethical attitudes to be absorbed or transformed, see e.g. Pl. Ap. 28b–d, Arist. NE 4. 3, esp. 1124^b6–1125^a12, 9. 8, esp. 1169^a18–^b1. See also 4.7, text to nn. 301–16.

²⁴² See 4.7 below, text to nn. 301–10.

²⁴³ The desire to *replace* the poetic figures as cultural paradigms with the 'heroes' of the philosophical tradition (e.g. Socrates and the various versions of the 'wise' person) is not necessarily compatible with the acknowledgement that both sets of figures tend to generate similar psycho-ethical conflicts.

enquiry, together with the associated similarity between the problematic heroes of the Greek poetic tradition and Greek philosophical normative figures. The key general point which emerges from this similarity is that, in both these areas of Greek culture, psycho-ethical conflict is conceived in (what I am calling) 'objective-participant' terms. This is so in that the conflict arises out of the role of reflection in validating, grounding, or correcting conventional thinking about shared, communal values. Reflection, in both areas, typically takes the form of shared debate or argument rather than solitary introspection; and the desired outcome of such reflection is conceived as the proper understanding of the goals of a human life rather than the subjective determination of a private ethic.²⁴⁴ In other words, the ethical conflict involved is that between *two* shared ethical frameworks (pre- and post-reflective) rather than between conventional (shared) ethical values and the search for 'self-realization', as conceived in subjective-individualist terms.²⁴⁵ The psychological framework assumed is 'objective' in that it is couched in terms of the relationship between parts or functions rather than of 'I'-centred subjectivity or will. It is 'objective-participant' in that it presupposes that these functions (such as the formation of belief-based emotions and desires) are typically shaped by shared ethical discourse, either of a pre-reflective or post-reflective type.²⁴⁶ Thus, underlining the analogy between the most important type of psycho-ethical conflict in the two areas does not only serve to highlight an important feature of cultural similarity; it also serves as a means to define the conception of personality displayed in a profound and suggestive area of Greek psychological and ethical thought.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ In Greek philosophy, see esp. 4.5–6, 5.6–7 below; in Greek poetry, see Ch. 2 above, esp. the critique of the 'subjective-individualist' account of the role of heroic reflection offered by Whitman and Parry (2.5 above).

²⁴⁵ See below 4.5, text to nn. 122–37, and 5.2, for an interpretation of the nature and content of ethical reflection in Greek philosophy which is 'subjective' in being couched in terms of 'self-realization', but is conceived in (broadly Kantian) *objectivist-individualist* terms rather than the kind of *subjectivist-individualist* mode noted in n. 244 above.

²⁴⁶ See 3.1 above; also below 4.2, 4.4, 4.6; 5.3, text to nn. 100–9, taken with 5.5–7.

²⁴⁷ On the relationship between these features of Greek poetic and philosophical thought, and on the broader parallel between the problematic heroes of the poetic tradition and Greek philosophical psycho-ethical norms or exemplars, see below 4.7; 5.6, text to nn. 263–74; 6.7, text to nn. 215–27.

4

The Personality Unified by Reason's Rule in Plato's *Republic*

4.1 PRELIMINARIES

So far in this book, the focus has been on the patterns of thinking about personality embodied in Greek epic and tragedy. When Greek philosophical theories have been introduced, the aim has been to elucidate poetic patterns of thinking by comparison with philosophical ones. In the remaining chapters, this procedure is reversed. My focus is on Greek philosophy, and, when poetic material is introduced, the aim is to underline certain connections with philosophical patterns of thinking.¹

As in the case of the Greek poetic material, I think that we can gain a better understanding of certain key questions in Greek philosophy by pursuing the thought that the relevant theory expresses an objective-participant, as distinct from a subjective, individualist, or subjective-individualist conception of the person. In this chapter, I focus on a theory that might be considered important in any account of thinking about personality in Greek philosophy. This is the theory of the tripartite psyche in Plato's *Republic*; more specifically, the ideal of a psyche harmonized by reason's rule. I think that this theory can be illuminated by taking it as expressing two key themes of the objective-participant conception of personality, summarized in the next paragraph. At the same time, what is meant by calling this conception of personality 'objective-participant' can be clarified by exploring Plato's theory. This is so, not because Plato's theory represents the only form that an objective-participant conception of personality can take, or, indeed, the only form that it can take within Greek ethical philosophy. But it is a theory which offers a striking exemplification of one possible combination of an 'objective' (non-

¹ On the rationale for combining poetic and philosophical material in a single study of this type, see *Introd.*, text to nn. 46–8.

subject-centred) psychological model and a 'participant' ethical model. It also offers a clear statement of an 'objectivist' position on psycho-ethical questions, and one that is defined, in part, by reference to the relationship between first-order (practical, deliberative) reasoning and second-order (reflective) reasoning, both types of reasoning being understood in an objective-participant form.²

I take the theory of the *Republic* as exemplifying two of the ideas offered in the *Introduction* (p. 12) as key features of the objective-participant conception of personality.

To be a human being is to participate in shared forms of human life and 'discourse' about the nature and significance of those shared forms of life. The ethical life of a human being is expressed in whole-hearted engagement with an interpersonal and communal role and in debate about the proper form that such a role should take. The ultimate outcome of these two forms of participation is both (a) objective knowledge of what constitutes the best human life and (b) a corresponding character and way of life.

To be human is to be the kind of animal whose psycho-ethical life (typically conceived as interplay or 'dialogue' between parts of the psyche) is, in principle, capable of being shaped so as to become fully 'reason-ruled' by (a) the action-guiding discourse of interpersonal and communal engagement and (b) reflective debate about the proper goals of a human life.

The former theme can be restated in the following terms, which bring us closer to the specific form of the argument in the *Republic*.

The full development of human ethical rationality consists of two distinct, but interdependent, processes. One is the development through interpersonal and communal participation of the kind of belief-based dispositions that would be characterized as 'reasonable' by someone with objective ethical knowledge. The other is the conversion of these beliefs into objective ethical knowledge by properly conducted argument among dispositionally and intellectually prepared participants.

The presence of this pattern shapes the form in which the ideal of the reason-ruled psyche is conceived. There are, in fact, two such ideals,

² On these contrasting frameworks, see *Introd.*, text to nn. 28–35, and 6.7 below, text to nn. 195–214.

each one correlated with one of the two stages of the educational programme designed for the guardians of the ideal state. Both stages of development are presented as yielding a specific type of reason-ruled psycho-ethical harmony (the second type being more complete than the first). One of the key questions raised by the theory is that of the kind of rationality (and 'reasonableness')³ and of 'virtue', present in each of the two types of psychic harmony.

As in other chapters, I define the objective-participant character of the conception of the person which is present in the Greek material by contrast with certain analogous features of the contrasting conception, including those which seem to inform the interpretations of some other scholars. In this topic, the relevant ideas include those formulated in the Introduction (p. 11) in this way:

To be a 'person' is to be capable of grounding one's moral life by a specially individual stance (for instance, that of 'autonomy', in one of the possible senses of this term). To treat others as persons is to treat others as autonomous in the same sense.

To be a 'person' is to be capable of disinterested moral rationality, involving abstraction from localized interpersonal and communal attachments and the correlated emotions and desires.

Both of these ideas are especially associated with Kant's moral theory, and reflect his 'individualist' (as distinct from 'participant') ethical approach. Although there are subjectivist-individualist versions of the idea of moral autonomy,⁴ Kant's version of this idea (and of that of moral rationality) is better characterized as objectivist-individualist. It is the Kantian version of these ideas that is most relevant to the interpretation of Plato's *Republic*. On the one hand, Terence Irwin, writing from a broadly Kantian standpoint, and, on the other, critics of Kantian ethical theory, such as Bernard Williams and Martha Nussbaum, interpret Plato's thinking in the light of these ideas (see 4.3, 4.5). The thrust of my argument, by contrast, is that it is the objective-participant ideas stated earlier, rather than these Kantian ideas, that enable us to make the best

³ On the distinction between 'rational' and 'reasonable', and on 'reason' as both a function and a norm, see Ch. 3 n. 16; and 4.2 below, text to n. 37.

⁴ See 2.5 above, text to nn. 99–109; also, on the relationship between this conception of autonomy and the Kantian one, Ch. 2 nn. 45 and 105.

possible sense of Plato's psycho-ethical ideal in the *Republic*. It is partly by debating with these scholarly responses to Plato's work that I bring out the relevance of my larger contrast between objective-participant and subjective-individualist conceptions of the person to the study of this key text in Greek ethical psychology.

I begin (4.2) with the question whether Plato's ideal should be understood, in (roughly) Kantian terms, as the control of non-rational desire by the rational, and potentially reasonable, element in us or as the shaping of all parts of the psyche, including desire, by reasonable norms. Although the answer to this question is not wholly clear-cut, I argue that Plato's theory in the *Republic* as a whole requires the latter answer; and that this implies that the appetitive or desiring part of the psyche is, to some extent, rational.

In the light of this view, I consider the contribution of both of the stages of the *Republic*'s educational programme towards producing a psyche which is 'harmonized' by reason's rule. As regards both stages, I define my interpretation, in part, by contrast with Irwin's account in *Plato's Moral Theory* (1977), outlined in 4.3. Although this is one of the most powerfully argued of modern analyses of the moral theory of the *Republic*, it is, I think, informed by a broadly Kantian approach that does not provide the best possible basis for understanding Plato's psycho-ethical ideal.⁵ I think that the Kantian aspect of his standpoint leads Irwin to understate the contribution of the first stage. I take this stage as providing the kind of shaping of the personality as a whole (including emotions and desires) through interpersonal and communal participation that does not figure as an important dimension of Kant's moral thinking, though it is emphasized by anti-Kantian thinkers such as MacIntyre and Williams. I suggest, in partial qualification of Irwin's account, that this stage is conceived as yielding properly virtuous motivation,

⁵ Irwin's *Plato's Ethics* (1995) reached me only when this book was already in press; otherwise, I would have based my discussion on Irwin's latest views on this subject (I have been able to indicate some of the distinctive features of the later book in footnotes). Though originally intended as a 2nd edn. of Irwin (1977), and retaining the same general approach (1995, ix), it does so in a fuller, more qualified, and (I think) more convincing form. However, Irwin's account of *R.* in (1977) remains a useful basis for my argument here. It has been, for nearly 20 years, an important and influential book on Plato, reprinted 4 times, most recently in 1989. Also, and more relevantly for my project, it exemplifies in a clear form (rather more starkly than in Irwin (1995)) the outcome of an engagement between a broadly Kantian (in my terms, 'objectivist-individualist') moral approach and Plato's argument; see further text to nn. 71–2 and n. 72 below.

though not to the same degree as is yielded by the full two-stage programme (4.4).

As regards the second stage of education, my main concern is to define the relationship between the kind of psycho-ethical harmony produced by this stage and that produced by the first stage. However, this question needs to be placed against the background of a general characterization of the type of reflection involved and of its outcome (4.5). I suggest that the Kantian dimension in Irwin's approach leads him to offer an inappropriately individualist account of the type of reflective reasoning involved. However, anti-Kantian theorists such as MacIntyre and Williams (who do not see ethical reflection, however grounded, as capable of achieving objective or universal knowledge) are of only limited use in helping us to define the conception of reflection involved. What Plato seems to have in view is a type of reflection which *both* validates the norms of reasonableness already built into the communal structure *and* does so by reference to objective norms which are independent of this structure. This conception of reflection is both 'participant', in several senses, and 'objectivist'; and both aspects need to be taken seriously if we are to make sense of the psycho-ethical ideal involved.

I then take up the question of the psycho-ethical harmony produced by the second stage of the education programme and of its relationship to that produced by the first (4.6). Plato seems to conceive the former as a type of virtue which is deeper and better grounded than that yielded by the first stage, but which also provides a model for that produced by the first stage. I consider some of the tensions that arise from this conception, notably in connection with Plato's (seemingly ambiguous) presentation of the motivation of the philosopher-rulers for re-entering the cave. I argue that any resolution that we offer of this tension should be framed in terms of an appropriately objective-participant conception of personality, and I offer some proposals of this kind.

As suggested earlier (3.6, text to nn. 234-47), the tension which arises in connection with the philosopher-rulers' re-entry to the cave seems to resemble those that arise in connection with the problematic heroes of Greek epic and tragedy. This raises the larger question of the relationship between the types of reflective reasoning involved; it also raises the question whether Greek philosophers recognize this resemblance (4.7). I suggest that the points of contact both between the Greek poetic and philosophical conceptions of

reflection, and between the resulting psycho-ethical tensions, are significant, despite some important differences; and that exploring these points of contact can help us to define the conception of personality involved.

4.2 WHAT IS REASON'S RULE?

The ideal of the psyche whose functions are harmonized by reason's rule figures prominently in two key passages in the *Republic* and is implied elsewhere.⁶ What larger picture of psycho-ethical life and development is implied by this ideal? I approach this general question by focusing on a more specific one: is this ideal that of the conscious control of one part (or set of parts) by another or the unforced cohesion of the parts? To ask this question, as I bring out shortly, is to raise the issue whether Plato's psycho-ethical model is closer to Kant or to Aristotle. It is also to begin to clarify the sense in which Plato's ideal here can usefully be described as 'objective-participant' in the conception of personality which it implies.

An initial difficulty is that the *Republic* seems to give contrasting indications at different points about whether the ideal is that of psycho-ethical control or cohesion. For instance, when the idea of the tripartite psyche is introduced in Book 4, we are told that the rational (*logistikon*) and spirited (*thumoeides*) parts must be 'put in charge of' (*τηρήσειν*) the appetitive or desiring part (*epithumetikon*). This is so, because the latter

is the largest part of the personality [*psyche*] in each of us and by nature the most insatiable [*ἀπληστότατον*] of possessions. [The other two parts] must prevent it from taking its fill of the so-called 'bodily pleasures', in case it becomes so great and powerful that it does not mind its own business but tries to enslave and rule the other parts—something that does not suit its character—and so wrecks the life of all of them.⁷

This passage seems to suggest that the Platonic ideal is that in which the rational part, supported by the spirited one, coerces recalcitrant desires into accepting its rule; in other words, that virtue necessarily involves internal struggle and (possibly conscious) self-restraint. On

⁶ See R. 441d-444e, esp. 441e-442a, 442c, 443d-e; and 589c-592b, esp. 589a-b, 590a-b, 591b-d.

⁷ R. 442a6-b3; see also the comparison of this part to a many-headed beast or vegetable in 588c-592a, esp. 589a-b, 591b; on which see Gill (1985), 22-4.

the other hand, in the same context, we are told that the temperate (*sophron*) psyche is characterized 'by the friendship [*philia*] and harmony [*sumphonia*] of these parts, when the ruling and the two ruled parts agree [*ὁμοδοξῶσι*] that the rational part should rule and do not engage in factional strife [*στασιάζωσιν*] with it' (R. 442c10–d1). Of the other passages that point in the same direction, one of the most telling is one in Book 8 which explains why the oligarchic person is 'never free of internal strife' (*ἀστασίαστος*) and is a 'double person' (*διπλοῦς*), by comparison with the genuinely 'unanimous' (*ὁμονοητικῆς*) and 'harmonized' (*ἡρμουςμένης*) psyche (R. 554d9–10, e4). Although the oligarchic person seems to be just in his business dealings, in fact: 'by means of a certain decent self-constraint [*ἐπιεικεῖ τινὶ . . . βίᾳ*], he restrains other, bad desires present in himself, not persuading them that this is the better way, or taming them by reason [or 'argument', *λόγῳ*] but by compulsion and fear, in his concern for the rest of his property' (R. 554c12–d2). These comments about one of the defective types carries implications about the kind of psycho-ethical unity achieved, by contrast, in the ideal type. In the ideal type, we can infer, desires are *not* left unchanged by the two-stage educational programme but are 'persuaded' by it, so as to yield 'agreement' between the desiring and the other parts.⁸

In adjudicating between these interpretations of Plato's ideal, it is useful to hold in view two alternative conceptions of the relationship between reason and emotion/desire, namely those of Kant and Aristotle. Kant does not presuppose that the properly moral response necessarily involves the conscious suppression of emotion and desire. His ideal is rather that in which the person, responding to the overriding claims of duty, acts from motives of disinterested rationality, setting aside the kinds of emotion and desire that derive from individual inclinations and attachments.⁹ This response is allowed by Kant to include one type of feeling: namely the 'reverence for the law' which is the subjective accompaniment of self-subordination to universal laws recognized by the person as rational being. But Kant stresses that this is not a 'feeling', in the usual sense:

although reverence is a feeling, it is not a feeling *received* through outside influence [that is, influence falling outside the rational will] but one *self-*

⁸ See also R. 431c5–d2, 548b6–c2, 549b6, 571b, 586e.

⁹ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 66–8, 83–7.

produced by a rational concept, and therefore specifically distinct from feelings of the first kind, all of which can be reduced to inclination or fear . . . reverence . . . means merely consciousness of the *subordination* of my will to a law . . .¹⁰

Kant's idea seems to be that, in the face of one's rational recognition of the absolute claims of duty, feelings (in the ordinary sense) cease to have any weight. However, since, in Kantian theory, there is no scope for complete modification, through moral education, of feelings and desires,¹¹ the exercise of the rational will may, necessarily, involve the conscious exercise of self-restraint, as Kant himself recognizes: 'Man must therefore judge that he is able to stand up to [his inclinations] and subdue them by reason—not at some time in the future but at once (the moment he thinks of duty).'¹² In a further development of this view, some modern thinkers have suggested that the 'subduing' of emotion by reason is a necessary part of what constitutes the properly virtuous response. For W. D. Ross, 'Vice is passive obedience to natural instinct, virtue the controlling of instinct by sense of duty or by some higher motive.'¹³ For G. von Wright:

Action in accordance with virtue may therefore be said to be the outcome of a contest between 'virtue' and 'passion'. If we raise the question: what has the man of virtue *learnt* . . . the general form of the answer is: He has learnt how to conquer the obscuring effects of his passions upon his judgement of good and evil.¹⁴

Aristotle's conception of ethical virtue (that is, 'virtue of character', *ethike arete*, as distinct from virtue of intellect) is instructively

¹⁰ Kant, *ML*, p. 66, n. 16, his italics: see also Williams (1985), 190–1. Underlying this comment is Kant's general view that each human being constitutes a combination of a rational being, capable of 'transcendental' freedom and rationality, and a natural creature, subject to natural causes and sensuous instincts; see *ML*, pp. 111–18, and 6.6 below, text to nn. 150–2.

¹¹ The promotion of appropriate feelings, in children and adults, is seen as a process which is merely preliminary to the properly moral response: see Kant (1960), 18, 83–4; (1964), 14 and 126; see also nn. 15 and 80 below.

¹² Kant (1964), 379. Contrast also Kant's conception of moral 'character' with that of Aristotle, discussed in text to n. 15 below: ' . . . simply to have a character relates to that property of the will by which the subject has tied himself to certain practical principles which he has unalterably prescribed for himself by his own reason.' Kant (1978), 203.

¹³ Ross (1923), 206, a comment made in criticism of Aristotle's conception of virtue.

¹⁴ See von Wright (1963), 147, his italics; the Kantian tone is the more striking in the light of von Wright's generally Aristotelian approach.

different.¹⁵ In essence, it consists in the unforced cohesion of beliefs and reasoning with emotions and desires, in which both sets of functions operate in a right or 'reasonable' way. It is true that Aristotle sometimes analyses the human psyche as a combination of a rational part which is the natural ruler, and a non-rational (or partly rational) part, the locus of emotions and desires; and characterizes ethical virtue as the obedience of the former by the latter.¹⁶ However, this should not be taken as implying the kind of control of (non-rational and non-reasonable) instinct and passion by (reasonable) reason and will that seems to be envisaged by Kant, Ross, and von Wright. Aristotle also stresses that the emotional and desiring part of the psyche is naturally capable of this type of obedience; and that, in this respect, it can be treated as a subdivision of the rational part.¹⁷ This part is said to be open to 'persuasion' by reason, as is shown by our use of advice, either in the form of criticism or encouragement (NE 1102^b33–1103^a1). The relationship of this part to reason is also compared to that of a child to father or tutor.¹⁸ In such passages, Aristotle's use of the term 'reason' (*logos*) is ambiguous between the idea of 'reason' as a function and as a norm.¹⁹ But it seems clear from his overall theory that both senses of 'reason' are required. Aristotle wants to say *both* that, in an ethically virtuous person, emotions and desires are amenable to rational persuasion (and are, to this extent, rational functions) *and* that, in such cases, emotional and rational functions are working in line with normative reason.

This view comes out even more clearly in passages which stress the idea that ethical virtue involves the co-operation of both types of

¹⁵ On Aristotle's distinction between virtue of 'character' (*ethos*) and of 'intellect' or 'mind' (*dianoia*), see e.g. NE 1103^a3–10, EE 1220^a4–12. On the contrast between Kant's psycho-ethical ideal and Aristotle's, see e.g. Sherman (1989), 45–50, 119–24; Lear (1988), 149–50.

¹⁶ See e.g. EE 1220^a10–11: 'ethical virtues belong to the part which is non-rational but which is naturally obedient [*ἀκολουθητικῶν*] to the part which has reason'; see also 1220^a1–2, in which reason (*logismos*) is said to be the natural ruler of desire (*orexis*) and the emotions (*pathemata*). In NE 1102^b30, the non-rational or partly rational part of the psyche is said to be 'concerned with appetite and desire in general' (*ἐπιθυμητικὸν καὶ ὁλως ὀρεκτικὸν*). On Aristotle's psychological model, see refs. in n. 21 below and Lear (1988), 142.

¹⁷ See NE 1102^b30–1103^a3. See also EE 1220^a5–7: 'Character (*ethos*) . . . is a quality in accordance with governing reason of the non-rational part of the psyche which is capable of obeying reason.'

¹⁸ NE 1103^a2–3, 1119^b12–14. For the linkage found here between interpersonal and intrapsychic discourse, cf. text to n. 55 below.

¹⁹ For this distinction, see n. 37 below; also Introd. n. 58; Ch. 3 n. 199.

function (both working in accordance with normative 'reason'). For instance, Aristotle says of the desiring part of the temperate (*sophron*) person that it 'agrees in every way [*πάντα . . . ὁμοφωνεῖ*] with reason' (*logos*, meaning here the rational part of a virtuous person).²⁰ The same thought is also put in this form:

Therefore, the appetitive part [*epithumetikon*] of the temperate person [*sophron*] must agree with [*sumphonein*] reason [*logos*, the rational part of a virtuous person]. For their shared goal is the fine [*kalon*], and the temperate person desires what he should and as he should and when he should; this is what [normative] reason commands. (NE 1119^b15–18)

These comments show a clear resemblance to the passages in the *Republic*, noted earlier, in which the virtuous psyche is presented as one in which the desires have been 'persuaded' by education or 'agree with' (*ὁμοδοξῶσι*) with the rule of the rational part.²¹ However, Aristotle's account, more clearly than Plato's,²² indicates that the 'agreement' involved is *both* that between the emotional/appetitive part and the rational part *and* that between both these parts and normative reason.²³ Several of his most characteristic accounts of ethical virtue underline the thought that it is a state in which both wholly and partly rational functions work (and work together) in the right way, or 'as [normative] reason directs'.²⁴ The same point is implied in his comments about the co-functioning of (proper) patterns of emotions and desire (*hexeis*) and of (the proper use of) practical reasoning in a person of virtuous character. Thus, for instance: 'since ethical virtue is a disposition to make choices, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be

²⁰ NE 1102^b26–8, taken as part of 1102^b25–1103^a1. On the significance of Aristotle's distinction between temperance and self-control, see text to n. 30 below.

²¹ See text to n. 8 above. On the relationship between the subdivisions, whether tripartite or bipartite, in the Platonic and Aristotelian psycho-ethical theories, see e.g. Fortenbaugh (1970), 241–50, (1975), 23–31; Kenny (1978), 167–8.

²² This point is not explicit in Aristotle, but is a clear implication of his theory. On this point in Plato, see text to nn. 36–7, 66–8 below.

²³ This is so except in so far as the rational part is seen as possessing (normative) reason in a more direct way (i.e. as the object of belief or knowledge) than the other parts, as may be the case in the EE refs. in n. 16 above and NE 1103^a1–3. This point may help to explain why Aristotle does not see the need to make explicit the distinction between reason as a function and as a norm.

²⁴ See e.g. NE 1115^b12 and 19, in which the verb 'directs' is supplied by analogy with e.g. NE 1125^b35; see also the general definition of ethical virtue in NE 2. 6, esp. 1106^b18–23, 1106^b35–1107^a2.

true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts.²⁵

Sometimes, indeed, Aristotle makes it seem as though the emotional or desiring part of an ethically virtuous person is, in some sense, the more directive part, as in his comment that 'ethical virtue makes the aim [*skopos*] right and practical wisdom [*phronesis*] makes the means to the end right'.²⁶ However, his normal view is that ethical virtue inheres in the co-operation, and interaction, of the emotional or desiring and rational aspects of virtue.²⁷ Without ethical virtue, even effective practical reasoning expresses mere cunning or cleverness (*deinotes*); and, without practical wisdom (*phronesis*), even a person of good *ethos* cannot reason out the best means to achieve her good ends.²⁸ An illustration of the co-functioning of a ('reason-ruled') pattern of emotion or desire and ('reason-ruled') practical reasoning is given by Aristotle's analysis of courage (*andreia*) discussed earlier in connection with Odysseus' deliberative monologue.²⁹ What is clear from this analysis, as also from Aristotle's distinction between the complete virtue of temperance (*sophrosune*) and the partial virtue of self-restraint (*enkrateia*), is that someone who needs to *make herself* react in the right way, by the conscious control of emotions or desires, is not virtuous in the full sense.³⁰ Thus, Aristotle would take the characterizations of virtue given by Kant, and still more by Ross and von Wright, cited earlier, as being descriptions of incomplete virtue.³¹

If we seek to correlate Plato's ideal of psychic harmony with the ethical ideals of Kant and Aristotle, we encounter a number of difficulties in the *Republic's* presentation of this ideal. The initial characterization of the parts of the psyche in Book 4 differentiates them by reference to functions, one of which is appetite or desire

²⁵ See NE 1139^a22-6, tr. Barnes (1984), modified; also cited in 1.3 above, text to n. 138. See also NE 1144^a8-9, 1178^a16-19.

²⁶ NE 1144^a8-9; on means-end reasoning, see 1.2 above, text to nn. 80-4, including the point made in n. 84; see also Sorabji (1980a), 212.

²⁷ See e.g. NE 1144^a30-2, 1178^a16-19.

²⁸ See NE 1144^a20-1144^b17; also refs in n. 26 above.

²⁹ NE 3. 7, II. 11. 404-10; see 1.3 above, text to nn. 141-8.

³⁰ See NE 1117^a18-22, taken with 1115^b7-24; and, on the distinction between *sophrosune* and *enkrateia*, NE 1102^b26-8 and 1151^b34-1152^b6. See further Burnyeat (1980), 77-9; Rorty (1980a), 271-9.

³¹ See text to nn. 12-14 above. For modern philosophical views on this point which are close to Aristotle's, see e.g. Blum (1980), ch. 8; Solomon (1980); Williams (1973a), 207-29.

(*epithumia*), whereas, in Book 9, each of the parts is characterized as a mode of desire (*epithumia*) for a certain class of objects.³² The parts are defined initially by a relatively narrow range of functions, but the argument, as it proceeds, requires each of the parts to exhibit a wider range of functions. The initial presentation of the theory stresses the sharp distinction between two of the parts, the rational and the appetitive (R. 436b-439d), whereas the argument as a whole requires there to be a complex, and mutually informing, relationship between these functions as well as between them and the spirited one.³³

Although these difficulties are real,³⁴ it is possible to offer an outline of Plato's theory which meets the needs of the present enquiry. The parts of the psyche are, indeed, characterized by their functions; but these functions need to be understood, from the start, in a relatively broad way, and in a way that allows them to communicate with, and be affected by, each other.³⁵ The functions of the rational (*logistikon*) part are those of practical and theoretical reasoning and of 'learning'; the latter function must include the capacity to gain knowledge. The functions of the spirited (*thumoeides*) part are those of forming and expressing emotional responses, both positive and negative (such as admiration and shame) to ethical ideals. The functions of the appetitive (*epithumetikon*) part are those of forming positive and negative responses, such as desire and fear, regarding pleasures and pains linked especially with the body and material possessions. The psychological model is unintelligible unless we assume that the parts have some common functions, notably that of responding to beliefs, whether conscious or unconscious.³⁶ The

³² See R. 436a8-b1 and 580d-e, esp. d8.

³³ See further on these difficulties Annas (1981), 124-46; Irwin (1977), 191-5, 226-33; also Williams (1973b), who sees the theory as fundamentally incoherent.

³⁴ See also the related difficulties identified in 4.3 below, text to n. 92.

³⁵ For this line of approach see Moline (1978), 10-15; Annas (1981), 124-46; Lear (1992a), 194-208; Irwin (1995), 217-22. For a more fully schematized account of the relationship between ethical psychology and epistemology in R., see C. D. Reeve (1988), 135-69.

³⁶ On these functions, see R. 436a9-b1, 439d5-441c1, 441e4-6, 442a4-b3, 442c10-d1. The distinction between spirited and appetitive elements has sometimes been seen as psychologically implausible, and as a product of the need to find a psychic equivalent to the auxiliaries in the *polis*. But the central role of the emotions linked by Plato with *thumos*, as distinct from *epithumia*, in the Greek poetic tradition (on which see 3.2, 3.5 above) should be enough to correct this view. On 'spirit', see further Gosling (1973), ch. 3; Annas (1981), 126-8; Gill (1985), 8-9; C. D. Reeve (1988), 136-7; Price (1995), 65-7; Irwin (1995), 211-13. On Plato's psychological model and consciousness, see text to nn. 48-52 below.

model also requires that we see the parts as capable of communicating with each other and (in ways to be explained) of modifying each other's aims by their intercommunication. Each of the three parts can also be understood (as in *R.* 580d–e) as a mode of desire, namely, the desire to fulfil its correlated function.

Plato's model is also unintelligible unless we supply a distinction not made explicitly: namely that between 'reason' as a function and as a norm. Plato's ideal is not that in which rational functions informed by *any* beliefs direct other functions. Rather, it is that in which rational functions informed by right ('reason-ruled') beliefs, and, ultimately, knowledge, direct functions of emotion and desire which are also so informed, and which are, in that sense, also 'reason-ruled'. These two preconditions are interdependent. As the account of the defective psycho-ethical types of Books 8–9 brings out, unless the other functions are themselves 'reason-ruled', they prevent the rational function (1) from ruling, and (2) from ruling in a (normatively) 'reason-ruled' way. Also, unless we supply the idea that 'reason' signifies a norm as well as a function, we cannot make full sense of the opening arguments for the separation of reason and spirit from desire.³⁷

In exploring the psycho-ethical model presupposed by the argument, and in seeing what kind of 'harmony' this model allows, it is helpful to refer again to the idea of 'the self in dialogue', which I have taken as a central image for the objective-participant conception of personality, and to take account of its three, related aspects.³⁸ Regarding the first aspect, the *Republic*, as we have seen, presents intrapsychic activity as an internal dialogue: one part (or the person himself) 'rules' or 'persuades' other parts, which do or do not 'agree' with this rule.³⁹ As elsewhere (in Homer as well as Greek philosophy), there is no reason to take this as indicating the (quasi-Cartesian) assumption that all intrapsychic activity is accompanied

³⁷ The examples of *R.* 439a–d and 439e–440b, in particular, which are used to illustrate psychic conflict, and so to substantiate the claim of the separation of the functions, need to be understood in terms of a conflict between (rational or spirited) functions guided by normative reason and (appetitive) functions not so guided. On this point, see (from a critical standpoint), Williams (1993), 42–3. On a further sense of 'reason', namely as a certain mode of desire, see n. 212 below.

³⁸ See *Introd.*, text to nn. 39–45. The three aspects relate to intrapsychic life, interpersonal interchange, and reflective reasoning or debate.

³⁹ See refs. in text to nn. 7–8 above; also Moline (1978), 13–14; Annas (1981), 131. On the significance of the interplay between the psychic part and 'he' in the Platonic model, see n. 50 below.

by a conscious inner dialogue. Rather, it seems that, when this psychological language corresponds to conscious dialogue, this indicates an exceptional degree of intrapsychic conflict, as in the examples of Leontius' struggle with his voyeuristic desires, and Odysseus' rebuke to his 'spirited' heart.⁴⁰

More often, the language of dialogue seems to be used to analyse forms of intrapsychic relationship which are not experienced as internal dialogue by the person concerned. The analysis of defective psycho-ethical states in Books 8–9 is particularly suggestive in this respect. This analysis brings out a point which is not wholly apparent in Book 4: that the psychic parts function in a closely interconnected way, and that the functions of the appetitive part, even though sometimes presented in 'animal' or even 'vegetable' terms, involve beliefs, as do the functions of the other parts.⁴¹ Thus, for instance, in the development of the democratic psycho-ethical type, the disposition to refuse to give priority to necessary over non-necessary desires is brought about by the replacement of one set of arguments and beliefs (*logoi* and *doxai*) by another such set concerning what should count as 'virtues' and 'vices'.⁴² Similarly, the emergence of the psycho-ethical type presented as 'tyrannized' by lawless desire (574e) occurs through the replacement of the beliefs (*doxai*) implanted in childhood about what is fine and disgraceful by beliefs which were formerly suppressed and which manifested themselves only in dreams.⁴³ Thus, although the emergence of the tyrannized psycho-ethical state is described as the onset of 'madness' (*mania*) the madness is of a type that involves 'rationality', in the sense of the emergence of a set of beliefs about what are desirable goals to pursue.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ See *R.* 439e–440a, in which Leontius' struggle (displayed in inner dialogue, 440a3) is analysed in terms of psychic parts 'forcing' or 'reproaching' each other (440b1–2); see also 441b3–c2, referring to *Hom. Od.* 20. 17, discussed in 3.2 above, esp. n. 27. See also above 1.2, text to nn. 98–104; 3.6, text to nn. 225, 233; and Gill (1991), 176, 186–8. Even when intra-psychic conflict is analysed by reference to internal dialogue (as in Aristotle's analysis of *akrasia*, 'weakness of will' in *NE* 1147^a31–4), such dialogue need not necessarily be taken as signifying conscious conflict.

⁴¹ See text to nn. 7 and 35–6 above.

⁴² *R.* 560c2–d6, taken in the context of 559d–561e.

⁴³ *R.* 573b1–4, 574d5–e2; see also 571b–572b.

⁴⁴ The *mania* involved is defined by contrast to *sophrosune* ('temperance' or 'moderation') 573b4; see also 573c9, 574e–575b, 579d–e. See the analogous conception of 'madness' in *S. Ai.* (3.4 above, text to nn. 144–8). The belief-based nature of

The analysis of defective psycho-ethical states in Books 8–9 does not only bring out the point that there is localized interplay between the functions of the parts of the psyche. It also shows that these functions are themselves modified, in their objectives, if not their basic character, by modifications in the power-structure of the psychic parts, modifications which can themselves be presented as a kind of internal 'discourse' or relationship. Thus, when the oligarchic type hands over dominance to 'the appetitive and materialistic [*φιλοχρήματων*] part of himself . . . he sets the rational and spirited parts on either side of the appetitive part, and beneath it, as its slaves, and allows the former to reason [*λογίζεσθαι*] and enquire [*σκοπεῖν*] about nothing but how to make more money out of less, and the latter to admire and respect nothing but wealth and the wealthy . . .'⁴⁵ Also, the progressive analysis of appetite or desire (*epithumia*) shows that its character is also subject to modification along with other changes in the psychic power-structure, changes which are themselves brought about by changes of belief.⁴⁶ Relatedly, we learn, contrary to what we might infer from Book 4, that *epithumia* is not necessarily correlated with a determinate set of objects (body-based pleasures). Any given psychic part or psychic structure can be said to have its own overall *epithumia*, and one which allows a certain role, whether minimal or maximal, to the body-based desires linked to the *epithumetikon* part in Book 4.⁴⁷

Some of the features just noted are among those which have led several scholars to link Plato's psychological model with Freud rather than Descartes. Features in the *Republic* most relevant to this comparison include these: the tripartite psyche; the idea that desire is displaceable in its objects; and the idea that powerful, partly unconscious (and often suppressed), beliefs and desires underlie

the process involved is more fully emphasized in the emergence of the other three types: 550a–b, 553b–d, 555d–561d, discussed in text to nn. 45, 55–60 below. On the belief-based character of the process involved, see Lear (1992a), 200–4, esp. 200 n. 79, and 212–13, esp. n. 156; also Irwin (1995), 283–7 (see further n. 60 below). On the idea of emotions as belief-based, see e.g. Rorty (1980d), chs. 15–21; G. Taylor (1985), 1–5; Cairns (1993), 5–6, esp. refs. in n. 8.

⁴⁵ R. 553c5, 553d1–5; on the key role of money or property as the primary means of satisfying body-related desires, see 580d11–581a7.

⁴⁶ See e.g. the subdivision of desires into necessary and non-necessary, lawful and unlawful, and the deployment of these categories to analyse the oligarchic, democratic, and tyrannical types (R. 558a–562a, 571a–575b).

⁴⁷ See R. 580d–581e, esp. 580d8, 586a–587a; also 485d and text to nn. 42–4 above. Contrast 436a10–b1, 439d6–8, 442a5–b3.

human actions.⁴⁸ A more general point of comparison, also relevant to the contrast with the Cartesian model, is the idea that human motivation in general is best analysed in terms other than those of which human beings are generally aware.⁴⁹ However, this comparison needs to be qualified by acknowledging that Freud, though seeking to modify the Cartesian model in important ways, still operates in what is, in certain key respects, a post-Cartesian framework. Thus, the distinction between what is conscious and unconscious *matters* for Freud (because of the central role of consciousness in the post-Cartesian understanding of human thought) in a way that it does not matter for Plato. Similarly, although Freud wants to limit drastically the psychological scope of the Cartesian 'I' (the self-conscious locus of thought and will), the notion of an 'I' (*Ich* or *ego*), and the contrast with what is 'not-I' (*es* or *id*), is central to Freud's psychological model in a way that it is not for Plato, or for any Greek thinker.⁵⁰ For Plato, the central question is: what are the conditions that need to be fulfilled for the psyche to be fully reasonable (reason-ruled in a normative sense)? This question is not centred on the notion of a self-conscious 'I' in the way that the central questions are for Freud.⁵¹ In this respect, Plato's psychological model is closer to that of a functionalist such as Dennett (who also deploys the notion of internal dialogue as a means of analysing the interplay between functions), than to that of Freud.⁵²

So far, I have discussed only one aspect of the idea of 'the self in

⁴⁸ See R. 439c–441c, 485d, 571b–572b. See Price (1990), 254–67; also Kenny (1973), 10–14; Santas (1988), 72–9. On Lear (1992a), see n. 52 below.

⁴⁹ On this point, see Ferrari (1990), 116–17; and, on the content of the Platonic analysis, Mackenzie (1981), chs. 9–10.

⁵⁰ Thus, there is no reason to give special weight to places where Plato analyses intrapsychic life in terms of the relationship between 'he' and parts (as distinct from doing so in terms of the relationship between parts), e.g. in R. 550a–b, 553c–d, 554c12–d3. There is no reason to think that Plato's use of 'he' (rather than 'reason' or 'the rational part') carries the same kind of significance that the idea of 'I' has for Freud; see also text to nn. 57–60 below.

⁵¹ This point is noted, but not developed, by Ferrari (1990), 117–18.

⁵² See Dennett (1979), ch. 9; and on the analogy between Dennett's 'anthropomorphism' of psychological parts and Plato's model, Annas (1981), 142–6. To say this is not to overlook other differences between Plato's thinking and functionalism; see further 6.5 below, text to nn. 139–44. Lear (1992a), esp. 184–5, focuses on the parallels between Plato and Freud concerning the interplay between intrapsychic and interpersonal relationships. This approach is of special interest for my enquiry; I would like Lear to offer a more analytic account of the relationship between the conceptions of personality (Platonic and Freudian) within which these parallels occur.

dialogue', that relating to the interplay between parts or functions. But this kind of 'dialogue' needs to be taken in conjunction with both of the other kinds (interpersonal or communal dialogue, and reflective reasoning or debate) if we are to form a full and coherent picture of the *Republic's* psycho-ethical framework. In Chapter 3, I suggested that (what we call) 'psychological language' in Homer could not be discussed adequately without situating such language in the context of the discourse among Homeric figures about what constitutes a 'reasonable' psycho-ethical response, or, in some cases, without reference to the heroic figure's reflectively-based stance within this discourse.⁵³ Similar points apply to the conception of human psycho-ethical life that seems to inform the presentation of key choices made by the defective types in *Republic* 8–9.

The figures are represented, as they reach adulthood, as making a choice of dominant (life-shaping) goal and of the correlated psycho-ethical structure, and of doing so in the context of the discourse within their family and community about what constitutes desirable life-shaping goals and values.⁵⁴ The dialogue within the self is closely connected with the dialogue between persons or 'selves'; and the character-type that emerges is a product of the combined outcome of these two types of dialogue.⁵⁵ For instance, the timocratic type is presented as emerging in response to the competing claims about desirable life-goals of his father, a just person in an unjust community, and his mother and family slaves, who point out the disadvantages, as they see it, of the father's priorities and way of life. (R. 549c–550b).

Then the young man, seeing and hearing all these things, and hearing, on the other side, what his father says, and observing his way of life from close at hand and comparing it with that of the others, was pulled by both of these. The father fostered the rational element in the psyche and helped it to grow, and the others the appetitive and spirited elements . . . [As a result,] pulled by both of these, he came to an intermediate position, and handed over the dominance within himself to the intermediate element, the spirited part that loves victory . . . (R. 550a4–b6)

⁵³ See above 3.3, text to nn. 52–5; also, in tragedy, 3.4, text to nn. 141–8, 3.5, text to nn. 164–8, 185–8.

⁵⁴ On the extent to which these choices are to be seen as 'rational' (in a functional and normative sense), see text to nn. 57–65 below.

⁵⁵ A similar idea is implied in Arist. *NE* 1102^b30–1103^a1 (cited in text to nn. 20–1 above).

A broadly similar pattern can be seen in the processes by which the other types acquire their pattern of priorities and correlated psychic structure.⁵⁶

How far are the processes by which they acquire these patterns presented as 'rational', and as 'reasonable' ('rational', in a normative sense)? The processes are 'rational' to the extent that, in all cases, including, to some degree, the emergence of the tyrannical type, they involve the adoption of action-guiding beliefs.⁵⁷ In three cases, the figures are presented as adopting deliberately a pattern of priorities and, in two cases, an associated psycho-ethical structure.⁵⁸ There is no reason to suppose that Plato's descriptions are intended to correspond to the conscious thought-processes of the person involved, or that, if the choices were conscious, this would give them some special status for Plato. The descriptions seem designed rather to analyse the process by which a person's psycho-ethical state and way of life takes on a certain character, regardless of how conscious of this the person himself is.⁵⁹ The analysis brings out the way in which the interplay between a given psycho-ethical state and set of social influences leads a given set of life-shaping beliefs to become dominant, and so to shape the personal character and way of life. When we are told that 'he' chose his goals and psychic structure, this is what such a 'choice' means.⁶⁰

The reasoning involved in the adoption of these goals is, broadly speaking, of the type I have been calling 'second-order', or 'reflective'. The figures do not simply make localized decisions in the light of their existing goals but choose one set of life-shaping goals in

⁵⁶ See R. 549c–550c, 553a–e, 559c–561c, and (to some extent) 572c–573c.

⁵⁷ See R. 549d–550a, (by implication) 553b–554b, 560b–561c, 572b–d, 573b1–4, 574d5–e2.

⁵⁸ See R. 550a–b, 553c–d (involving a choice of psycho-ethical structure as well as priorities); 561b–c (a refusal to discriminate between necessary and unnecessary desires). The transition to the tyrannical (or 'tyrannized') character-state (572e–573b) does not involve a clearly-marked choice, though it is not wholly non-rational; see text to nn. 43–4 above and 61 below.

⁵⁹ It is particularly implausible to think that, in what are most clearly marked as choices (550a–b, 553c–d), we are meant to conceive the figures as choosing consciously to put one part of the psyche in charge of the others; this is, clearly, a way of presenting the observer's analysis of the situation.

⁶⁰ See refs. in n. 50, 58 above; see also Lear (1992a), page refs. in n. 44 and 52 above. Irwin (1977), 226–332, and, esp. (1995), 283–8, gives more weight than I do to the idea that (a single) 'he' chose the life-goals, taking this to denote a way of presenting a defective use of reason's capacity to take care of the psyche as a whole.

preference to another.⁶¹ The pattern clearly reflects the 'choice of lives' theme, which appears in Achilles' great speech, and is then firmly embedded in the Greek poetic tradition and its philosophical continuation, and is central to the structure of the *Republic* as a whole.⁶² As in the poetic cases (and in the philosophical theories), the choice seems to be conceived in 'objective' terms, in the sense that the life is chosen as being what the chooser sees as being the best type of human life. Although it is made plain that each type of person chooses as he does because of the specific form of the interplay between his psycho-ethical structure and interpersonal influences, there is no suggestion that any of them chooses a life as being a mode of individual self-realization.⁶³

However, there are certain features of the defective figures' choices which differentiate them both from that of heroic figures such as Achilles and from the reflective reasoning of Plato's normative figures, the philosopher-rulers. I presented Achilles' great speech as expressing, by implication, sustained reflection about the values and life-goals embodied in his community's practices and, more generally, about what constitutes a worthwhile human life. For the Platonic defective figures, there is no single set of communal values but rather competing versions.⁶⁴ Also, there is little evidence that the Platonic defective figures *reflect*, in any sustained way, or engage in systematic and well-grounded argument. The decisions

⁶¹ The preferential pattern is clear in three cases (refs. in n. 57 above); even the emergence of the 'tyrannized' type involves a competition between advocated values and life-goals (572e) and the rejection of one set of these (573b1-3).

⁶² See Hom. *Il.* 9. 410-16, *S. Ai.* 473-80; also 2.8 above, text to nn. 193-4, and 3.4 above, text to nn. 113-15. See also Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.1.21-34, *Pl. Gorgias* (*Grg.*) 484c-487e, *R.* 358-68, 617d-618b; see further Gill (1983a), 469-70, esp. n. 8.

⁶³ Even the democratic type, who might seem, on the face of it, to be most likely to make an 'individualistic' choice, selects his life as being the best in general, 'pleasant, free, and blessed' (*R.* 561d6-7, also 561c3-4, 572d2-3); see also the relative valuation of different lives in 549e-550a, 553a-d. On 'self-realization' as a life-goal, conceived in subjectivist-individualist form, see above, 2.3, text to nn. 47-8; 2.5, text to nn. 98-104. For a distinct, objectivist-individualist, conception of self-realization, see below 4.5, text to nn. 122-37 and 5.2.

⁶⁴ Apart from the situations described at each end of the cycle of defective types (*R.* 549c-550b, 575c-576b), it is not easy to correlate precisely the cycle of psycho-ethical types with the parallel cycle of politico-ethical types, or to provide any other determinate socio-political context for the psycho-ethical types. But the fact that the reflection does not derive from a cohesive set of ethical principles in the community clearly marks one significant point of difference from the normative pattern of reflection in *R.* (4.5 below), as well as from Achilles' reflection, as interpreted here (see above 2.6, text to nn. 127-30; 2.8, text to nn. 187-203).

that they make are presented simply as the outcome of the struggle between their received pattern of values and priorities and those recommended by new influences on them, with little in the way of reflection about the nature or basis of either set of values.

These points take us some distance towards answering the second question raised earlier: how far are the life-choices of the defective figures presented as embodying (normative) rationality or 'reasonableness'? The defective figures' choices lack two elements contained in the two-stage programme of ethical education as preconditions of valid reflective reasoning. These are: (1) proper psycho-ethical grounding in the principles of a cohesive, reason-ruled community, and (2) proper intellectual training for shared, systematic analysis (dialectic). By contrast, in *Republic* 8-9, when the defective figures reject their received life-guiding principles, they do so not as a result of intellectually well-grounded examination but in response to the attraction exerted on their psycho-ethical state by the new pattern of beliefs. The new set of beliefs are presented as derived from, as well as validating, certain—unreasonable—kinds of desires. The desires are, progressively, more unreasonable, not because desires are, in themselves, non-rational (or unreasonable), but because they express patterns of priorities and psycho-ethical states which are progressively more remote from that which is presented as normatively 'reasonable'.⁶⁵

This discussion of the implications of *Republic* 8-9 puts us in a better position to answer the question raised at the start of this section about the understanding of desire, and thus of the kind and degree of psycho-ethical harmony allowed by the theory. If we follow through these implications, it seems clear that the depiction of the appetitive or desiring part of the psyche as 'insatiable', capable of 'wrecking the lives' of the other parts, and proliferating like a wild, many-headed beast or plant, is a characterization not of desire as such, but of desire as shaped by 'unreasonable' beliefs and life-goals.⁶⁶ Correspondingly, it seems clear that desire, including the body-based desires especially associated with the *epithumetikon* part,

⁶⁵ See refs. in n. 57 above, and text to nn. 42-6 above.

⁶⁶ See text to n. 6 above. This point goes some way towards answering the question raised in Gill (1985), 22-3: why does the picture of psychic harmony in 588c-592b seem to underline the unassimilably 'animal' character of desire? In so doing, it confirms the cautionary picture of desire which is shaped by 'unreasonable' life-choices in *R.* 8-9; for the depiction as 'bestial' of desires which are not shaped by rational and reasonable norms, see 571b-d, 572b, also 586a-b.

can be rendered 'reasonable', if shaped by the belief-patterns and life-goals of a (normatively) 'reason-ruled' psyche.⁶⁷ It follows that the *Republic's* thinking about what constitutes psycho-ethical harmony is much closer to the Aristotelian, than the Kantian, conception of the relationship between emotions and properly ethical, or moral motivations.⁶⁸ However, to confirm and develop this conclusion, we need to take account of the *Republic's* ideal programme of education, and to see how far this embodies the psycho-ethical assumptions that seem to underlie Books 8–9.

4.3 THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME: IRWIN'S INTERPRETATION

How does the psycho-ethical harmony produced by the ideal educational programme differ from the condition of the defective types presented in *Republic* 8–9? In the interpretation of the tripartite psyche just offered, the rational element in the defective, as well as the normative, psyche 'does its job' of reasoning and 'taking care of' the psyche as a whole, in the sense that it works out the means to implement the objectives which the psyche sets for itself.⁶⁹ Also, the psyche acquires these objectives by a form of 'second-order' reasoning, reflection (albeit of a limited kind) about the goals which a human life should have. Each of the defective types is also 'harmonized' and 'unified' in the sense that it has an overall goal and that the goal adopted shapes the way in which the three functions of the psyche operate and relate to each other.⁷⁰ What is it, then, that entitles Plato to say that the psyche which is the product of the ideal educational scheme is, in some distinctive way, harmonized by reason's rule.

These questions are also raised, in broadly similar terms, by Terence Irwin in his study of Plato's moral theory in (1977), 236–50. Irwin also highlights the related problem that Plato offers a general characterization of the harmony of the reason-ruled at a point in the argument (Book 4, 441c–444e) when he has presented only the first stage in his educational programme, and not the second stage which

⁶⁷ See R. 586d–587a, and text to n. 47 above.

⁶⁸ See text to nn. 9–31 above.

⁶⁹ On the functions of the rational part, see R. 439d5–6, 441e4–5, and text to nn. 35–6 above.

⁷⁰ See text to nn. 45–7, 54–63 above.

provides the intellectual basis for 'reason's rule' in the full sense.⁷¹ Irwin's discussion of the *Republic* in (1977), ch. 7, provides a penetrating analysis of this aspect of the argument. However, it is, I think, informed by a combination of Kantian and post-Kantian strands, which do not, in my view, provide the best possible basis for understanding Plato's theory. Roughly speaking, Irwin adopts a Kantian view of what counts as a properly 'moral' theory, and of the role of emotions (as shaped by interpersonal and communal engagement) in moral life. He adopts a partly Kantian and partly post-Kantian view of the nature of ethical reflection and the function of ethical theory.⁷² His analysis seems to me to understate the 'participant' aspect of Plato's ethical thinking (both at the interactive and reflective level), and thus to miss the connection between this and (Plato's version of) objectivism about ethical knowledge and standards. Close attention to Irwin's account can help us to define, by contrast, these aspects of Plato's argument, and the (objective-participant) conception of the personality that they express.

In saying that Irwin's interpretation of Plato is informed by Kantian thinking, I do not mean to suggest that Irwin claims that Plato and Kant have moral theories of the same general type. In (1977), ch. 8, Irwin draws a clear distinction between the eudaimonistic moral theories of Plato and Aristotle, in which happiness is assumed to be the overall human goal, and the deontological approach of Kant and others, in which the absolute priority of duty is taken as the basic principle.⁷³ None the less, it is clear that, in

⁷¹ See Irwin (1977), 202, 208, 211–12, 216–17; also Annas (1981), 133–5; Gill (1985), 12–15. The same point applies to the corresponding presentation of the virtues in the *polis*, 427d–434d, esp. 428b–429a. Stage one of the educational programme (R. 2–3, 376d–412a) is designed for (childhood) education of 'auxiliaries' (R. 413c–414b), and stage two (R. 6–7, 502d–541b) for the adult education of the subgroup of auxiliaries who are dispositionally and intellectually capable of becoming guardians, of whom a tiny minority become philosopher-rulers (503a–504a, 537b–d, 539d–540c).

⁷² On the way that Kantian thinking shapes Irwin's account of Plato's argument as a whole, esp. the first stage of education, see text to nn. 72–87 below; on the combination of Kantian and post-Kantian strands in Irwin's thinking about the second stage of education, see 4.5 below, text to nn. 125–8. On Irwin (1995), see n. 5 above. The general approach in (1995), chs. 11–18, esp. chs. 17–18, is similar to that of (1977), but less clearly Kantian, and with a number of significant qualifications and clarifications, some of which are noted in nn. 102, 105, 133, 230, 239 below.

⁷³ Irwin (1977), 259–67. His position is, thus, distinct from that of e.g. Prichard (1968), ch. 1, for whom the Greek theories, since they are not deontological in character, are not properly *moral* at all. Prichard's type of position underlies Adkins's views about the primitive understanding of psycho-ethical cohesion in Plato and Aristotle: see Adkins (1970), 166–7, 194–7; and 1.1 above, text to nn. 34–6.

setting the standards which he thinks that the Greek theories (as moral theories) should reach, within their eudaimonistic framework, he presupposes broadly Kantian standards. For instance, he asks how far the Greek eudaimonistic theories can accommodate the assumptions that moral principles '(1) benefit other people and (2) that anyone has reason to pursue them as his overriding principles'.⁷⁴ Also, in considering whether Plato's theory meets these requirements, he presupposes what seem to be Kantian assumptions about the conception of ethical motivation, and ethical rationality, that Plato's argument does—or should—contain.

I think that the influence of Kantian thinking leads Irwin to give a misleading picture of the psycho-ethical states which are the products of the two stages of ethical education, and of the relationship between these. As regards the outcome of the first stage, he claims that the psycho-ethical state produced is not properly virtuous, and is, indeed, not properly 'reason-ruled' (202–3):

[This phase of education] only trains someone to take pleasure, suffer pain, feel shame, anger, and pride in the right objects before he acquires reason . . . He is still dominated by appetite and emotions [i.e. the appetitive and spirited elements in the psyche], not by the rational part's deliberation about the goals of the whole soul. . . . He still regards virtue as a source of pleasure or honour, and that is why he chooses it; he would not choose it without these consequences and so he does not choose it for its own sake.

How does Irwin interpret the outcome of the second phase of education, which he sees as contributing the crucial element of the direction of reason and ethical motivation which is missing in the first phase? He presents this stage of the programme as designed to promote self-conscious, critical examination of one's life-shaping goals, and a reasoned selection of one's primary goal. He understands the dialectic which forms the concluding stage of the educational programme as constituting 'rational deliberation to guide the choice of ultimate ends'.⁷⁵ Knowledge of the Form of the Good, and of the relationship between this and other Forms, is interpreted by him as constituting the systematic co-ordination of one's goals and

⁷⁴ Irwin (1977), 250. These ideas can be seen as versions of the two forms of the 'categorical' (i.e. absolute, non-contingent) imperative presented by Kant as fundamental to morality; see *ML*, pp. 83–93. See significant refs. to Kant in Irwin (1977), 271–6, 282, 284. On the larger issue of the relationship between Greek and modern accounts of ethical motivation, see 5.3 below.

⁷⁵ See *R.* 531d–534e; Irwin (1977), 235, taken with 223–6, 233–6.

the identification of 'a single unified goal for [one's] life'.⁷⁶ However, given that, as Irwin recognizes, the defective types also deliberate, in some sense, about their life-shaping goals, the problem arises of distinguishing their deliberation from that of the normative person. Irwin thinks that Plato has not made the nature of this difference as clear as he should have done; but that it is possible to construct an answer on Plato's behalf which will meet Irwin's requirements for a properly moral theory.⁷⁷

The deliberation of the normative philosopher-ruler is characterized by two main features. One is that: 'His rational second-order decision prefers the ends . . . acquired by deliberation about the good of the whole soul. The deviant men allowed no rational reflection to influence their acquisition of first-order goals, but simply endorsed some appetitive or emotional goal they already pursued'.⁷⁸ The second is that the philosopher-ruler's reflection leads him to give absolute priority to virtue, including other-directed virtue, in a way that the defective types do not. Critical reflection leads reason to make 'a second-order decision in favour of "its own" [rational] first-order ends' (232). The 'rational' end which reason prefers must include the desire 'to express [one's] knowledge of Justice, Beauty, and the other moral Forms in actions which embody them' (237). In the light of this understanding of what reflective rationality is taken to yield, Irwin states the kernel of the *Republic's* argument about justice in this way: '[Plato's claim is] that someone who rationally reflects on the kind of life which best suits his whole soul, all his interests, desires, and capacities will find that he has reason to include just action in his life . . .' (245). Thus, Plato's ideal of psychic harmony, when fully explained, can be shown to be 'an account of real [that is, other-benefiting] justice, when [the idea of] "control by the rational part" is rightly understood' (242).

Before examining Irwin's claims more fully, it is worth noting the extent to which Plato's argument, as formulated by Irwin, takes on a strongly Kantian pattern, both in the understatement, as I see it, of the role of the first phase of education, and, to some extent, at least,

⁷⁶ See *R.* 505a–509e, 534b–c; Irwin (1977), 237, also 225–6. See further on Irwin's account of Plato's idea of reflection, 4.5 below, text to nn. 121–37.

⁷⁷ See Irwin (1977), 233: 'Unfortunately and inexcusably, Plato has no direct or detailed answer to these questions.' See also 233–46, in which he supplements *R's* account of dialectic by reference to the presentation of 'the ascent of desire' through critical reflection in *Symposium* (*Smp.*) 210a–212a and *Phdr.* 252c–256e.

⁷⁸ Irwin (1977), 245; see also 230–2, 236.

in the revision of the role of the second phase. As noted earlier, Kant conceives the properly moral response as one in which the person acts out of disinterested rationality, abstracted from localized attachments and from the emotions and desires that derive from these.⁷⁹ Correspondingly, Kant, unlike Aristotle, gives no substantive role within moral education to the training of emotions and desires through interpersonal and communal relationships. It is true that Kant allows some value to the public propagation of right beliefs and the promotion (in oneself as well as others) of the appropriate feelings. But he makes it plain that such a process is merely preliminary, or supplementary, to the adoption of a properly moral (that is, purely rational) stance.⁸⁰ Irwin does not refer explicitly to Kant in connection with his view that the first phase of education is being merely preliminary to the development of properly rational (moral) motivation.⁸¹ But it seems likely that the Kantian assumptions which shape his general reading of the argument are influential on this point too.

Irwin does cite Kant in connection with his understanding of the contribution of the second phase of Plato's educational programme to properly moral motivation (284):

[The] demand for knowledge and justification [implied in this phase] insists on first-hand rational beliefs; the really virtuous man must choose virtue for himself, for his own reasons, not on some second-hand support—custom, authority, training, and the rest. To value this pattern of choice, we must think it worthwhile in itself that a man should exercise his own independent rational capacities in adopting his beliefs; that is, we must value one part of what Kant includes in autonomy.

The part of the Kantian conception of autonomy to which Irwin refers is, presumably, the idea that the properly moral stance involves a specially individual stance, namely the self-legislative exercise of her will as a rational being.⁸² Irwin evidently sees a connection between Kantian autonomy and Plato's programme—as Irwin conceives this—of rational reflection on, and selection of, life-shaping goals, as distinct from the communal shaping of beliefs, emotions, and desire in the first phase of education. Like Kant, Irwin

⁷⁹ See 4.2 above, text to nn. 9–12.

⁸⁰ See Sherman (1989), 46, referring to Kant (1964), 14 and 126. See also Kant (1960), 18, 83–4.

⁸¹ See Irwin (1977), 202–3 (cited in text to n. 75 above), and 220.

⁸² On this, see Kant, *ML*, pp. 93–5; and 1.1 above, text to nn. 29–30.

stresses the importance of the idea that, in a properly moral response, the individual performs this self-legislative act for herself. His assumptions on this point inform his reading of the second phase of education, which (I argue later) misses the linkage between the communal and the objectivist aspects of Plato's conception.⁸³ The other main feature of Kant's idea of autonomy is that it is expressed in the self-legislation of principles which apply universally, to others as much as to ourselves. Also, it is a function of our nature as rational beings, as Kant understands this, that we are constitutively capable of recognizing the absolute ('categorical') nature of the imperative embodied in this self-legislation.⁸⁴ Analogously, in Plato's argument, as reconstructed by Irwin, it is a necessary outcome of the exercise of rational, or reflective deliberation that the person concerned makes a second-order decision in favour of the rational goal, and that the rational goal is taken to involve, as a key element, other-benefiting justice.⁸⁵ Thus, for Plato too, in this analysis, it is a function of our existence as rational beings that we are capable of the kind of independent (autonomous) rationality that issues in the recognition of the absolute priority of (other-benefiting) virtue.

The closeness of Irwin's interpretative framework to Kant's theory, in this respect, is indicated by the fact that Plato's theory, as thus analysed, seems to be liable to the same type of objection that Williams makes against Kant's. The objection, in essence, is that it is by no means self-evident that critical reflection on one's life-shaping goals *will* necessarily lead one to give priority to other-directed virtue.

It is true that I can stand back from my desires and reflect on them, and that this possibility can indeed be seen as part of the rational freedom at which any rational agent aims . . . but [this] still does not give the required result in relation to morality. The *I* of the reflective practical deliberation is not . . . committed from the outset . . . to making a rule from the standpoint of

⁸³ See 4.5 below, text to nn. 129–41.

⁸⁴ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 63–8, 78–101, esp. 84 and 91. See also Hill (1989), 96–101; and, on the correlated notions of 'autonomy' and 'freedom' of the will, see 6.6 below, text to nn. 150–2.

⁸⁵ See Irwin (1977), 232, 237, 242, 245, cited in text to nn. 78–9 above; see also, on Irwin's reformulation of Kant's theory of transcendental freedom, 6.6 below, text to nn. 156–60. Irwin (1977), 233–43, is presented explicitly as supplementing the argument of *R*. In order to provide what is needed to meet Irwin's conditions for a properly moral theory.

equality . . . and it is not, simply by standing back in reflection, converted into a being whose fundamental interest lies in the harmony of all interests. It cannot, just by taking this step, acquire the motivation of justice.⁸⁶

As I bring out later, Plato's theory is not liable to this type of objection, in part because of the crucial role of the first stage of education in promoting the belief-based dispositions that are the prerequisite for the reflectively-based ethical understanding which is developed in the second stage.⁸⁷ Irwin's reduced emphasis on the first stage, together with the revision which he makes to the aims and methods of the second stage, seem to render Plato's programme of ethical education as liable as Kant's to the objections made by Williams. To say this is not to deny that there are substantive problems in understanding the relationship between the two stages of the educational programme, and, in seeing how the second, reflective stage contributes the kind of ethical motivation, including other-benefiting motivation, that the theory seems to require. But, in approaching these problems, it is crucial to do so in the light of an appropriate ethical and psychological framework; and I do not think that Irwin's Kantian (and post-Kantian) framework provides this.

4.4 THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME: THE FIRST STAGE

I now consider in more detail Irwin's account of Plato's educational programme, focusing first on the first stage, and outline an alternative account, which develops the earlier discussion of the psycho-ethical model presupposed (4.2). The main thrust of Irwin's view of the outcome of the first phase of education is that, because a person so trained has not carried out the reflective deliberation about ends involved in the second phase, she does not choose virtue 'for its own sake' but only 'as a source of pleasure or honour'.⁸⁸ This view is also expressed in the claim that the person so educated 'is still dominated

⁸⁶ Williams (1985), 69, his italics; see also 61–6. Williams himself seems to think that a similar objection can be made to Plato's theory: see 4.5 below, text to nn. 164–8.

⁸⁷ See text to nn. 115–19 below, and 4.5 below, text to nn. 142–6, 171–3.

⁸⁸ See Irwin (1977), 202–3, cited in text to n. 75 above. See also 220: '[A] musically educated man . . . cannot explain what it is in virtue which would justify his choice of those actions . . . and so he does not choose virtue for its own sake, for what it is in itself.' On Irwin (1995), see n. 102 below.

by appetites and emotions' and not by 'reason'.⁸⁹ I accept Irwin's underlying point, that Plato's characterization of justice in the psyche (and, hence, his defence of the thesis that 'justice pays') is not complete by Book 4 (441–4); and that this should have been made plainer in Plato's argument than it is.⁹⁰ But I do not accept that this carries the conclusions which Irwin draws about the outcome of the first stage; or that the role of this stage in Plato's programme is rendered fully intelligible by Irwin's type of analysis.

In essence, I see the first stage as an integral element in a cohesive, interdependent, two-stage development of full ethical rationality. Each of the two stages yields a type of 'reason-ruled' psychic harmony, with a correlated type of ethical motivation, although the second is more complete than the first. The first stage provides 'reasonable' belief-based patterns of emotion and desire, and the capacity to perform practical reasoning in line with these, through engagement with the practices and ideals of a reason-ruled community. The second stage, for which the first is a prerequisite, provides, through intellectual education culminating in dialectic, objective understanding or knowledge of the (reasonable) principles embodied in the first stage. The psycho-ethical harmony produced by this stage differs from that produced by the first stage in its cognitive basis, and, relatedly, in the degree of harmony attained. The latter point raises significant questions about the relationship between the outcome of the two stages which are pursued later (4.6 below). But these problems do not invalidate the essential structure of Plato's argument, and the fact that it presents two correlated types of (properly) ethical motivation. The second stage of education, like the first, is conceived as taking place within a certain type of community; and this fact carries important implications for the conditions under which Plato sees the second type of psycho-ethical harmony involved as attainable. I suggest later that there are important similarities between this pattern of thinking about ethical rationality and that found in Aristotle; and subsequently I point to (partial) connections with Stoic and Epicurean theories.⁹¹ I think

⁸⁹ See Irwin (1977), 202; also, on 'reason', as Irwin understands this, refs. in n. 85 above.

⁹⁰ See refs. in n. 71 above and text to nn. 91–2 below: on the central thesis that 'justice pays', see R. 357b–368c.

⁹¹ See text to nn. 106–14 below (on Aristotle), and see further below 5.5, text to nn. 213–33; 5.7, text to nn. 360–4; 6.5, text to nn. 122–9. See further, on types of Greek ethical theory, 4.6 below, text to nn. 179–88.

that, on the points that matter for my enquiry, these theories are closer to each other than any of them is to the Kantian pattern presupposed by Irwin.

A potential problem for my view of Plato's programme (as also, in a different way, for Irwin's) is that, as noted already, the *Republic* offers its main characterization of justice as reason-ruled psychic harmony between the two stages of the educational programme (441c–444e). This passage, like the adjacent account of the virtues in the *polis* (427d–434c), seems to suggest that the first stage of education is all that is required to provide the virtues and the correlated psychic harmony, though it seems clear from the *Republic* as a whole that this cannot be wholly the case. Although this problem may not be fully resolvable, a partial solution is to say that these two passages are designed to characterize the virtues (in *polis* and psyche) both in the form in which they have been produced by the first stage and in which they are to be produced by the educational programme as a whole. In other words, there must be pre-reflective (or pre-dialectical) and post-reflective versions of the virtues and also of the correlated psycho-ethical states.⁹²

The nature of these pre-dialectical virtues and psychic states is indicated in those passages in Book 4 which summarize the outcome of the preceding first stage of education. Thus (441e8–442a5):

the combination of artistic and athletic education [*mousike* and *gymnastike*] will make them [the rational and spirited elements] harmonized, tending and nurturing the former by fine speeches and studies, and relaxing and soothing the latter by harmony and rhythm . . . When these two elements have been brought up in this way, and have learnt and been educated to 'do their job', in the true sense of this phrase, they should be put in charge of the appetitive element [a rule with which the latter should 'agree', 442d1].

This summary can be correlated with the detailed account of the first stage of education (and with the interpretation of the tripartite psyche offered in 4.2) in this way. The first stage can be seen as implanting the action-guiding beliefs that both (a) give the rational element the material with which to fulfil its job of (practical) reasoning and 'taking care of the psyche as a whole', and (b) give the spirited element the

⁹² This is virtually explicit in R. 429c, in the specification of the courage involved as 'citizen's courage' (*politike andreia*); in terms of R.'s political scheme, such courage must belong to the auxiliaries as distinct from the guardians who may eventually attain dialectical knowledge (see n. 71 above). See also n. 98 below.

material on which to base its (value-laden) emotional responses of indignation, shame, tough-mindedness, and so on.⁹³ In addition, the first stage, through the media of musical form and physical movement, shapes these responses in a more directly psychophysical (and emotional) way, though one which carries ethical significance, and thus reinforces these belief-patterns.⁹⁴ (3) The combined effect of this is to develop integrated patterns of belief-and-aspiration⁹⁵ which, in turn, shape the body-linked responses of appetite and fear, pleasure and pain. The fact that this stage of the programme is directed primarily at the spirited part of the psyche (in conjunction with some of the functions of the rational part) does not mean that the appetitive element is conceived as wholly non-rational and incapable of responding to beliefs.⁹⁶ It is rather that the shaping of appetite in line with (normative) reason is seen as being brought about primarily through the development of patterns of belief-and-aspiration.⁹⁷ It is in this way, it seems, that the first stage enables each of the parts of the psyche, and the psyche as a whole, to be ruled by (normative) reason, and thus to express the virtues, as far as is possible at a pre-dialectical level.

The model involved can also be illustrated by the account of the development of courage in the characterization of the virtues in the *polis* (427d–434c). Courage (at least pre-dialectical courage, *politike andreia*) is defined as the 'preservation . . . of the belief [*doxa*] created

⁹³ I am assuming that there are pre-dialectical versions of wisdom as well as courage (see 441e4–6, 442b11–c8). On the psycho-ethical functions involved, esp. those of 'spirit', see n. 36 above. See also n. 99 below.

⁹⁴ See R. 401d6–7: ' . . . rhythm and harmony penetrate most into the psyche and take a powerful hold on it', coupled with the claim in 400c–401c that all such media constitute 'encoded' versions of ethical ideals (on which see nn. 103–4 below). On the idea that the right combination of physical and musical education can play a crucial role in producing psycho-ethical harmony, see 410a–412a, and, on the outcome of this phase of education, see 522a, and, by implication, 548b7–c2.

⁹⁵ 'Aspiration' is a better term for the spirited part than Irwin's term (in 1977) 'emotion', because the emotions concerned are conceived as responses to ethical ideals: see refs. in n. 36 above.

⁹⁶ On the first stage of education as directed esp. at the shaping of the spirited part, see Gill (1985), 8–12. That desires are capable of responding to beliefs is implied by e.g. the characterization of the desires (*epithumiai*) of those who are best in nature and education as 'associated with reason' or 'mind' and led by the reasoning of right opinion (*μετὰ νοῦ τε καὶ δόξης ὀρθῆς λογισμῶ*), 431c5–6. See also 442d1, 443d4–e2; also 4.2, above, esp. text to nn. 66–68.

⁹⁷ See R. 441e8–442a5 cited in text to nn. 92–3 above. A rather different model seems to be presupposed in Lg. 653a–c, 654c–d, 655d–656b, 658e–660a, 790c–792c, in which the training of pleasure and pain is more closely integrated with the shaping of value-laden beliefs and emotional responses. On the relationship between the thinking of R. and Lg. on this level of ethical education, see Belfiore (1992), 34–5.

by the law through education about what, and what sort of things, are to be feared'.⁹⁸ Plato goes on to compare the process of choosing guardians with the appropriate natural qualities, and of educating them in music and poetry (*mousike*) and athletics (*gymnastike*), with that of selecting, preparing, and dying wool. The aim is that the 'combination of nature and the appropriate nurture' should make them 'accept the laws by conviction [*πεισθέντες*] like a dye, so that their belief about what is to be feared should be indelible' (429e7–430a3).⁹⁹ This passage should be taken together with the preceding description of the way in which the first stage of the educational programme promotes (by explicit statements as well as by use of narrative, poetic impersonation, musical mode and rhythm, and structured movement) emotional engagement with normative exemplars of courage.¹⁰⁰ The overall result is the development of cohesive belief-and-aspiration patterns, which ensure that the relevant beliefs will not be 'washed out' by such 'detergents' as pleasure, pain, fear, and appetite, that is, by the body-linked responses associated with the appetitive part.¹⁰¹

If we take the first stage of education as developing, in this way, pre-dialectical virtues and psycho-ethical harmony, this enables us to offer a different general characterization of the outcome of this stage from that given by Irwin. Instead of saying that a person so educated does not choose virtue 'for its own sake' but only 'as a source of pleasure or honour' (Irwin (1977), 202–3), we should say that those functions of the psyche which are correlated with honour and pleasure, as well as that of practical reason, are disposed to make someone choose virtue 'for its own sake', in the ways appropriate to those different functions. Also, instead of saying that such a person 'is still dominated by appetite and emotions' rather than reason (Irwin, 202), we should say that the appetitive and aspirational functions, as well as the rational ones, are all ruled by (norma-

⁹⁸ See R. 429c6–8, and, on *politike andreia*, 429e7–430c5; on Aristotle's (differently conceived) idea of *politike andreia*, see NE 1116^a17–^b3 and 1.3, above, text to n. 150.

⁹⁹ The beliefs involved include general, life-shaping ones and not simply localized assertions such as: 'Situations of type *x* are/are not to be feared'. See e.g. R. 377e–378b, 379c–380c, 386a–387e, 392a–b, and see further Halliwell (1984), 53–5; Ferrari (1989), 111–12.

¹⁰⁰ See R. 386c–388d, 395c–d, 399a–400a, 401b–402c, 410c–412a. On Plato's programme as a development of pre-existing Greek conceptions of education, see Gill (1985), 10 and refs., esp. Havelock (1963), ch. 9.

¹⁰¹ See R. 430a–b, 436a10–b1, 439d6–8, 442a5–b1.

tive) reason, as far as this is possible before the development of dialectically-based knowledge.¹⁰²

The difference between our views on this point can be illustrated by reference to Plato's characterization of the person educated by the first stage as someone who:

... would rightly praise and enjoy fine things [*kala*] ... and rightly condemn and hate disgraceful things [*aischra*], when he is still young, before he is capable of acquiring reason [*logos*]; but, when reason comes, someone brought up in this way would welcome it very much, recognizing it through kinship [*δι' οἰκειότητα*]. (R. 401e4–402a4).

This comment needs to be taken with the connected point (402b–c) that a person educated in this way would go on to recognize concrete manifestations of the virtues of temperance, courage, and so on. As the phrasing of this latter point may imply, such a person is not yet capable of acquiring 'reason', in the sense of having knowledge of the Forms of the virtues and of their 'copies', that is, their embodiment in concrete actions.¹⁰³ But this does not mean that he is not capable, prior to dialectical education, of 'reading' the concrete manifestations of the virtues which are encoded in the art-works and social forms of the reason-ruled community.¹⁰⁴ In other words, he is capable of engaging in practical reasoning and 'caring for his psyche as a whole' in a way that is based on a pre-reflective grasp of (objectively right) ethical principles, and of responding wholeheartedly, in aspirations and desires, in line with this grasp.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² In (1995), 235, Irwin qualifies this view, allowing that the well-educated auxiliary is not simply motivated by the desire to win honour but rather to win honour for being virtuous: 'it matters to him that he is honoured for his readiness to do the brave action without further incentive.' (For this type of analysis, though seen as yielding a more fully 'internalized' conception of the honourable than Irwin envisages, see 1.3 above, text to nn. 151–2). However, he retains the general claim that even the well-educated auxiliary, because he has not received dialectical education, does not choose virtue 'for itself' (233–5), comparing this with Aristotle's 'citizen bravery' (384, n. 15), rather than with Aristotle's conception of full (but pre-reflective) virtue, as I do in text to nn. 106–19 below. See also n. 105 below.

¹⁰³ See 'copies' (*eikonas*), R. 402b5, c6, and 'forms' (*eide*), 402c2; also the more theory-laden deployment of such terms in 508e3, 514a–517a, 520c. See further Ferrari (1989), 120–1, who points out that, even read in this way, the passage does not ascribe dialectically-based knowledge of the Forms to the people educated by the first stage.

¹⁰⁴ See R. 400c–402c; see also Gill (1985), 10.

¹⁰⁵ See R. 402d–403e for a more positive aspect of the shaping of appetitive responses (the conversion of sexual lust into an orderly and temperate [*sophron*] desire for the beautiful, 403a7–8, c6–7) than the countering of the influence of pleasure and pain in pre-reflective courage (text to n. 101 above). Irwin (1995), 217–18, gives more

I take it that Plato's thinking about the psycho-ethical outcome of the first stage is broadly similar to Aristotle's thinking about the co-ordinated development of the patterns of emotion and desire (that is, dispositions, *hexeis*), and of practical wisdom (*phronesis*), that make someone virtuous in 'character' (*ethos*). We can say of the person produced by the first stage of Plato's programme (with a reason-ruled psyche), that, like Aristotle's virtuous person, she is disposed to act and to feel 'as (normative) reason directs'. In Aristotelian terms, her acts are performed 'for the sake of the fine', and derive from 'a firm and consistent character'.¹⁰⁶ Aristotle himself connects his views and Plato's on the crucial role in the development of ethical virtue of habituation or 'rehearsal' in appropriate feelings and attitudes, as well as actions, through participation in the appropriate kinds of interpersonal and communal practices.¹⁰⁷ We may also see similarities between Plato's conception of the pre-reflective wisdom acquired by the rational element in the first stage and Aristotle's understanding of the intellectual virtue which is inseparable from ethical virtue, namely, practical wisdom or 'reasonableness' (*phronesis*).¹⁰⁸ Although it is clear that Aristotle believes that practical wisdom is properly applied in reflective debate about the proper goals of a human life, he does not stipulate explicitly that such reflection is a precondition for the possession of 'reasonableness'. The essential criterion is the consistency of practical wisdom with what (objectively right) reason would direct; it is not also specified that such consistency must depend on post-dialectical understanding of

weight to R. 401e-402a than he does in (1977), 202, 204, 330, n. 28.5; he takes it to refer to the acceptance by the appetitive part of the rule of the rational part (and thus its 'kinship' with this part), see also (1995), 218-22; for similar ideas, see 4.2 above, text to nn. 8, 35-6.

¹⁰⁶ See above 1.3, text to nn. 139-40; 4.2, text to nn. 15-30. Aristotle's key term, *ethos*, is used extensively by Plato in R., sometimes to denote the 'quality' of the psyche that is the product of the combination of nature and education: see e.g. R. 400d7, e3, 401b2, 492e4, 496b2, 549a8, 577a2.

¹⁰⁷ Arist. NE 2. 3, esp. 1104^b11-13, seems to refer to Pl. Lg. 653a-c; but the content of this passage in Lg. is close to that of R. 395c-d, 401d-402a (with the qualification noted in n. 97 above). See also, on 'rehearsal' in virtuous practices, NE 2. 1, esp. 1103^a31-^b6, and on the importance of the right kind of communal context, n. 110 below.

¹⁰⁸ See NE 6. 5, 8, 12-13, and refs. in n. 25 above. 'Reasonableness' is not a standard way of translating *phronesis*; but it may be preferable to 'intelligence', favoured by some recent translators, which sounds too ethically neutral.

the principles involved.¹⁰⁹ Also, it seems clear that for Aristotle as well as Plato, it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, for anyone to develop reasonableness and ethical virtue if she has not been brought up in a community guided by reasonable principles. Although Plato's *Republic* seems to set much higher standards for such a community than Aristotle does, both theories have in common (1) a stress on the communal foundation of ethical development and (2) the idea that the community concerned must be of the right general type.¹¹⁰ Although these points of analogy between Platonic and Aristotelian thinking require fuller exploration than I can provide here,¹¹¹ simply to outline them may help to clarify the substantive contribution to ethical rationality of Plato's first stage, which Irwin's account tends to obscure.

The character of Plato's thinking about the relationship between the two stages of education in the *Republic*, and their respective contributions to ethical rationality, can also be defined by reference to an Aristotelian distinction, the importance of which has been underlined by Myles Burnyeat. Aristotle maintains that, unless someone already has 'the that' or 'the fact' (*τὸ ὄν*), she will gain no value from engaging in ethical reflection or debate, which is designed to provide 'the why' or 'the explanation' (*τὸ διότι*). One gains 'the that' by being properly habituated by one's upbringing; this leads one to recognize 'that' this act is fine or just and to have the appropriate emotion or desire in response to this recognition.¹¹² The point needs to be coupled with Aristotle's assertion that the young (and those who are 'young in character', *ethos*) gain no benefit from attending lectures or discussions on ethics because they pursue their objectives

¹⁰⁹ See NE 6. 8, esp. 1142^a11-20, also 6. 11, esp. 1143^b11-14: 'Therefore, we should give no less attention to the undemonstrated statements and opinions of experienced and older people or reasonable people [*phronimoi*] than to [logically argued] demonstrations. Such people acquire an "eye" [*omma*] from their experience and so see correctly.' See further, on the relationship between practical and reflective reasoning in Aristotle, below 5.5, text to nn. 160-208; 5.6.

¹¹⁰ These points are less clear in Arist. than in Pl. R. because of the separate study by Aristotle of ethics and politics. But see NE 1179^b31-1180^a32; also *Pol.* 7. 13 and Irwin (1988), ch. 19, esp. 416-18. On the question in Greek philosophy of the right social context for the development of virtue, see below 5.7, text to n. 362-3; 6.6, text to n. 172.

¹¹¹ See further below on points of similarity and difference between Platonic and Aristotelian theories: 4.6, text to nn. 179-88; 5.7, text to nn. 325-9; 6.5, text to nn. 121-4.

¹¹² See NE 1095^b3-8, 1098^a33-^b4, and Burnyeat (1980), 71-3. See also EE 1216^b35-1217^a10, and Sherman (1989), 196-7.

'impulsively' (*kata pathos*) instead of 'reasonably' (*kata logon*) and so will not be able to use the results of reflection to shape their lives.¹¹³ The point needs also to be taken with Aristotle's concluding remarks in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that the kind of argument contained in his lectures can only help people to become better if they bring to the discussion a natural goodness which has been developed into goodness of character (*ethos*) by habituation in the right feelings and practices in the right kind of community.¹¹⁴

In Plato's case, I have already noted the claim that the first stage of education provides a pre-reflective grasp of the concrete manifestations of virtue and the associated responses of emotion and desire (in Aristotelian terms, 'the that'), which 'when reason comes', can be converted into an understanding of (in Aristotelian terms) 'the why'.¹¹⁵ This passage should be taken with a series of comments in which Plato emphasizes the role of the first stage of education as a prerequisite for the second stage (which culminates in dialectical analysis of key ethical ideas), and the disastrous effects of engaging in such dialectic without this preparation. Those who are to proceed to the second stage are those who show themselves to be most retentive of the action-guiding beliefs embodied in the first stage, and who show that this has become part of their character, or, in Platonic terms, the 'harmony in the psyche', created by this stage.¹¹⁶ In comments anticipating those of Aristotle in *NE* 1.3, Plato demands, as a prerequisite for dialectic about ethics, the kind of maturity and stability of character that will enable someone to be challenged about the ethical beliefs acquired in childhood without necessarily abandoning all such convictions and coming to regard dialectic as an amusing and purely destructive game.¹¹⁷ He also stresses that even someone who has the right combination of dis-

¹¹³ See *NE* 1095^a2-11; in this respect, they are like 'akraties', or the 'weak-willed'. See further Burnyeat (1980), 82-8.

¹¹⁴ See *NE* 1179^b4-31. See also Burnyeat (1980), 75; Sherman (1989), 164-5; and n. 110 above.

¹¹⁵ See 401d-402c, and text to nn. 103-5 above.

¹¹⁶ See *R.* 412c-414a. On pre-dialectical 'harmony' in the psyche, see 413c3-4, taken with 400c-402a and 411e-412a; also 442c-d, 443d-e; and on post-dialectical harmony, see 4.6 below, text to nn. 203-13. For a comparable Aristotelian emphasis on the need for ethical beliefs to 'become part of one's nature' (*συνμυθεῖν*), see *NE* 1147^a21-2, and Burnyeat (1980), 73-4.

¹¹⁷ See *R.* 503a-e, 537e-539d, esp. 539d; on *NE* 1.3, see text to n. 113 above. On the (contrasting) damaging effect of the loss of childhood ethical beliefs, see *R.* 8-9, refs. in nn. 42-3 above; also 550a4-b6, cited in text to n. 56 above.

positional and intellectual qualities to be able to complete the full educational programme is virtually bound to become corrupted by the public discourse of existing communities (which are not 'reason-ruled') and by the ethical beliefs propagated in this way.¹¹⁸ Thus, the preconditions for engaging in valid ethical dialectic (for seeking to understand 'the why', in Aristotelian terms) include the development of firmly-based ethical dispositions (a grasp of 'the that') in a community shaped by reasonable principles, which, for Plato, means that they must be based on objective ethical knowledge.¹¹⁹

4.5. THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME: THE SECOND STAGE

In analysing the specific type of psycho-ethical harmony that is produced by the second stage of the educational programme,¹²⁰ it is useful again to define my view by contrast with Irwin's Kantian interpretation. One of the merits of Irwin's account is that it brings out well a point also made here: that, in the *Republic*, defective as well as normative psycho-ethical types are presented as deploying 'first-order' and 'second-order' rationality in making concrete decisions and in shaping their lives.¹²¹ This necessarily raises the question of what it is that makes the normative person (the product of the two-stage educational programme) 'reason-ruled' in a way that defective people are not. Irwin's answer is that only the normative person has carried through the process of critical reflection (second-order reasoning) to the point of making a fully rational choice of goals.¹²² Irwin also believes that the product of the first stage of education (although, in some sense, 'reason-ruled') 'is still dominated by appetite and emotions, not by the rational part's deliberation about the good of the whole soul'.¹²³ It is only the

¹¹⁸ See *R.* 490c-502c, esp. 492b-c, 498a-c; see further Gill (1985), 5, 16-17.

¹¹⁹ This gives rise to one of the central cruxes of *R.*: the precondition of the ideal state's coming into existence is the presence of the kind of ethical knowledge which requires the prior existence of the educational scheme of the ideal state: see refs. in n. 118 above, and *R.* 497b-502c, 592a-b.

¹²⁰ For post-dialectical harmony, see *R.* 586d-587a, also 485d-486b, 500b-d (and, by inference, 549b, 554d-e); on 589a-b, 590a-b, 591b-e, see 6.6 below, text to nn. 175-94.

¹²¹ See Irwin (1977), 226-33; also 4.2 above, text to nn. 54-64.

¹²² Irwin (1977), 245, cited in text to n. 78 above; see also 230-2, 236. See also the similar account of Irwin (1995), 282-3, 288-97.

¹²³ Irwin (1977), 202; see 4.3 above, text to nn. 74-5.

product of the second stage of education in whom 'the rational part makes a second-order decision in favour of "its own" first-order ends—the ends accepted on rational . . . grounds' (1977), 232.

But what are the ends selected by such rational deliberation; and how does Plato's presentation of the normative (fully rational) psycho-ethical type serve his larger objective in the *Republic* of showing that justice constitutes happiness (357b–367e). Irwin believes that, in the *Republic*, Plato offers two views of the outcome of rational reflection on ends: (1) the contemplative view ('that contemplation of the Forms will be pre-eminently worthwhile for the philosopher'), and (2) the practical view ('that the philosopher will want to express his knowledge of Justice, Beauty, and the other moral Forms in actions which embody them' (237). Irwin acknowledges that Plato (misguidedly, as Irwin thinks) is sometimes inclined to adopt the contemplative view of what constitutes fully rational ends. Thus, Plato 'mistakenly suggests that the philosopher will want to stay contemplating the Forms and will not voluntarily undertake public service (519c4–6)' (242). However, Irwin argues that Plato's larger objectives in the argument require him rather to adopt a conception of the rational end which includes, at least, the practical view. Therefore, he constructs, on Plato's behalf, an account of the way in which second-order reasoning might yield this result. In essence, the idea is that rational evaluation of ends necessarily produces an understanding of oneself as a rational agent which is consistent with the practical view. Plato is held to claim that 'someone who rationally reflects on the kind of life which best suits his whole soul, all his interests, desires, and capacities, will find that he has reason to include just action in his life . . .'.¹²⁴ On this basis, Irwin thinks that Plato has, finally, shown how this idea of justice as psychic harmony 'is an account of real' [that is, other-benefiting] justice, when [the idea of] "control by the natural part" is rightly understood' (242), and has thus completed his argument that justice constitutes happiness.

How should we characterize the philosophical approach underlying this interpretation, and the conception of the person implied in this approach? As explained in 4.3 above, the approach is broadly

¹²⁴ Irwin (1977), 245, cited in 4.3 above, text to nn. 78–9; see also 233–43 for alleged parallels with *Phdr.* and *Smp.* A similar line is followed in Irwin (1995), ch. 18, esp. 298–302, 310–13, but stated in a more qualified form and with closer attention to Plato's text; see also nn. 133–4, 230, 239 below.

Kantian; more precisely, it seems to represent a combination of Kantian and post-Kantian strands. Kantian is the idea that the properly moral response involves a distinctively individual, and specifically rational, stance ('autonomy' for Kant, 'rational deliberation', in Irwin's analysis).¹²⁵ Kantian too is the implied assumption that all human beings are constitutively capable of making this type of rational stance, and that, if made, it will yield the kind of understanding that serves as the basis for moral motivation.¹²⁶ Characteristic of philosophy after Kant (including philosophy influenced by Kant) is the presentation of this type of understanding as a form of self-understanding, namely understanding of oneself as a rational agent. Also characteristic of more recent philosophy, rather than Kant, is the presentation of moral theory as a means by which, in principle, *anyone* can be led to see that realization of one's selfhood as a rational agent involves moral (understood as other-benefiting) motivation. As I suggest more fully in the next chapter, this combination (which can also be found, in another form, in the scholarly approach of Troels Engberg-Pedersen), represents a coherent synthesis of Kantian and post-Kantian thinking.¹²⁷ It can also be seen as one way (though not the only available way) of interpreting Greek ethical philosophy, with its consistently eudaimonistic framework of thought, so as to make it clear to modern thinkers that this is properly *moral* theory.¹²⁸

How should we characterize the kind of thinking exhibited in Irwin's interpretation, in terms of the categories (subjectivist-individualist and objective-participant) that I am using to define Greek thinking about the person? On the face of it, some of Irwin's language seems to express a subjectivist-individualist way of thinking about the role of reflective reasoning, of a kind that we find in Sartre, Nietzsche, or, in a less explicit form, in Harry Frankfurt's account of personhood.¹²⁹ The ideal dialectic described in *Republic*

¹²⁵ See 4.3 above, text to nn. 75–83.

¹²⁶ See 4.3 above, text to nn. 84–6. In effect, Irwin's model implies a naturalistic version of Kant's claims about the 'transcendental' capacity of humans (as rational beings) to recognize the 'categorical' claims of morality. For such a version of Kant's theory, see Irwin (1984), outlined in 6.6 below, text to nn. 156–9.

¹²⁷ See 5.3 below, text to nn. 68–74.

¹²⁸ See 4.3 above, text to nn. 73–4; 5.3 below, text to nn. 67, 75–7. A different, and less Kantian, version of this project is undertaken in Annas (1993); see her ch. 22, esp. 452–5.

¹²⁹ On Nietzsche, see 2.3 above, text to nn. 46–8; on Frankfurt (and Sartre), see 6.3 below, esp. text to nn. 60–6.

6-7 is presented by Irwin as a mode of deliberative introspection, in which the individual becomes self-conscious about his goals and modifies these in the light of his developing 'ideal' of himself: 'someone proposes candidates for ultimate end, and, when he reflects on them, expresses demands which he could not have expressed previously, and realizes their deficiencies . . . he is concerned not only with his *future* self, but also with his *future self*'.¹³⁰ Irwin offers little indication that this process of self-scrutiny is guided by objectively determined ethical norms. Indeed, his characterization of the Form of the Good as 'an ordered compound of what we accept after examination as goods in themselves' gives the impression that the Good becomes normative *because* it is the result of introspective examination rather than because its objective worth is disclosed through such examination.¹³¹ Relatedly, he claims that the philosopher-ruler's valuation of, and desire to engage in, philosophical contemplation is not 'rational because it is a desire for theoretical reasoning, but because it is a desire arising from practical reasoning'.¹³² Thus, when Irwin presents the outcome of the reflective process as being 'knowledge' (pp. 237, 239), it is difficult to see that any more is involved than the kind of 'knowledge' that someone gains when he 'exercise[s] his own independent rational capacities in adopting his beliefs'.¹³³

However, it is clear from the larger shaping of Irwin's interpretation that he does not presuppose this type of subjectivist-individualist model of the role of reflective reasoning. The passages

¹³⁰ Irwin (1977), 235, 241. See also Irwin (1995), 306-13, taken with 278-9, 288-97, 301-2.

¹³¹ Irwin (1977), 225, taken in the context of 224-6, and of his contrast between Platonic and Socratic conceptions of ethical knowledge, summarized in 177-8.

¹³² Irwin (1977), 237; see also 244-5, 246-7. This passage is emphasized by Nussbaum (1986), 462-3 n. 45, also 138-40, in her criticism of Irwin for reducing Plato's (objectively conceived) theory of moral truth to a formalist or procedural account of moral decision-making, allowing free (subjective) choice to each individual agent.

¹³³ See Irwin (1977), 284, cited more fully in 4.3 above, text to n. 82. Irwin (1995) goes some way towards dispelling these impressions about the nature of his view. On the Good, his point is that the understanding of this depends on our understanding of the virtues and of their interconnections (272-3). On the relationship between practical reasoning and contemplation, he presents 'deliberation from the holistic point of view' (that is, directed at the good of the psyche as a whole) as 'an exercise of rational thought aiming at the truth'. The valuation of the ultimate preferability of contemplation derives from a recognition of the truth; but it does not carry with it a devaluation of the (truth-directed) practical deliberative function of reason, which achieved this recognition (293).

cited in the previous paragraph are best understood in the light of synthesis of Kantian and post-Kantian strands described earlier. What Irwin is describing is the way in which (in his view) the process of rational deliberation, or conscious self-realization, will lead *anyone* to conclude that it is rational to become morally good and to benefit others.¹³⁴ The interpretative model is 'subjective' in the sense that it is couched, in part, in terms of 'self', rather than, for instance, what it means to be 'human' or 'divine'.¹³⁵ It is also individualist, in that reflection is characterized in terms of individual deliberation, as well as deliberation about the individual's self-realization. But it is not subjectivist, or subjectivist-individualist, as is the kind of modern thinking about self-realization considered in connection with some critical approaches to Homer's Achilles.¹³⁶ Rather, Irwin, like Kant, presupposes an *objectivist*-individualist model.¹³⁷ It is a model in which, in Irwin's case, properly conducted individual rational reflection leads *anyone* to an objectively correct self-understanding, thus providing the basis for moral (including other-benefiting) motivation.

I now outline an alternative, objectivist-participant, rather than objectivist-individualist, account of the function of dialectic in the *Republic's* educational programme. I define this account of the role of reflection by contrast with that of modern anti-Kantian thinkers such as MacIntyre and Williams as well as by contrast with Irwin's approach. In outlining such an account, a useful first move is to consider the implications of the analogy with the reflective reasoning of the poetic heroes suggested earlier.¹³⁸ Central to the presentation of these heroes, in my view, is the idea that their problematic stances and ethico-emotional states depend on reflective (second-order) reasoning, though of a kind that may be implied rather than explicit. However, it is not just *any* reflective reasoning that can be taken, in principle, as validating their stances, but only reasoning that fulfils certain conditions. Their reflective reasoning is often expressed in

¹³⁴ See text to nn. 125-7 above, and (1995), 312-13 (taken with refs. in n. 130 above); also below, 5.2, text to nn. 12-22, 5.3, text to nn. 68-74.

¹³⁵ For the latter terms of analysis, see R. 588b-592b (discussed in 6.6 below, text to nn. 175-94) as well as Arist. NE 10. 7-8 (discussed in 5.6 below). See also n. 156 below.

¹³⁶ See 2.5 above, text to nn. 98-109.

¹³⁷ For the contrast between Kantian and subjectivist-individualist conceptions of autonomy, see 2.5 above, text to nn. 102-3; 6.6 below, text to nn. 153-5.

¹³⁸ See 3.6 above, text to nn. 234-47.

what is, actually, or in effect, dialogue, or argument, with fellow-members of their ethical community;¹³⁹ and the fact that they use this mode of expressing reflection is significant in two ways. One is that this presents a pattern for the normal *mode* of ethical reflection (namely as shared argument or debate rather than introspection) which, I think, remains dominant in other areas of Greek culture, including philosophy. The other is that the *legitimacy* of their reflective reasoning is taken to depend on the extent to which it defines ethical principles whose validity can, or should, be recognized by other members of their community. It also depends on the extent to which the person concerned is entitled, by her previous engagement in the shared life of her community (or friendship-bond) to serve as the exponent of such principles.¹⁴⁰ My point is not that Homer and the tragedians present their central figures as, unequivocally, meeting such conditions and thus as justified in their problematic stances. It is rather that the presentation of these figures expresses the idea that, in so far as their stances are justifiable by reflective reasoning, it is by reflection which presupposes effective participation in the shared forms of life and shared values of their group. In both these respects, the model of reflection involved is 'participant' rather than 'individualist'.¹⁴¹

Taking note of this pattern of thinking in Greek poetry may take us some distance towards understanding Plato's preconditions in the *Republic* for the valid practice of dialectic as well as his conception of the character and content of such dialectic.¹⁴² These preconditions include the demand that the behaviour and emotional responses of the person concerned show that the ethical principles of her community have become an integral part of her character. Only such a

¹³⁹ I have argued that even what seem to be, in form, actual or quasi-monologues, e.g. *Il.* 9. 308–429, *S. Ai.* 646–92, *E. Med.* 1021–80, are better understood as argument with other members of the ethical community or, at least, as generated by the issues of such argument. See above 2.6, text to nn. 134–5; 2.8, text to nn. 187–203; 3.4, text to nn. 101–4, 124–43; 3.5, text to nn. 152–6.

¹⁴⁰ See refs. in n. 139 above, and above, 2.7, text to nn. 140–57; 2.9, text to nn. 222–38; 3.4, text to nn. 105–8, 138–40.

¹⁴¹ See further, on the parallels between Greek poetic and philosophical presentations of reflective reasoning, 4.7 below, including the question whether the poetic presentation prefigures the objectivist, as well as the participant, aspects of the Greek philosophical conception of reflective reasoning, text to nn. 273–8.

¹⁴² To say this is not necessarily to say that Plato's thinking on this is directly, and specifically, shaped by the poetic pattern; rather it is to say that the same cultural paradigm and the same (objective-participant) conception of the person are operative in both cases. See further 4.7 below, esp. text to nn. 293–316.

person will be able to engage in dialectical analysis of these principles in a way that does not undermine her pre-reflective beliefs and the patterns of aspiration and desire which depend on these.¹⁴³ Post-dialectical knowledge and virtue are described in terms which can be seen as correlated with these requirements. The philosopher-rulers are entitled *both* by their character *and* by their post-reflective understanding to define the ethical principles which are central to the life of the community. They act as the 'reason' of the community both in the sense that they deploy rational functions in 'caring for' the community and that they do so according to right ('reason-ruled') norms.¹⁴⁴ They are, thus, appropriately described as 'equalized' (*παρισωμένον*) or 'assimilated' (*ὁμοιωμένον*) in virtue (*arete*) to the community in which they play this role.¹⁴⁵ In the Aristotelian terms deployed earlier, they understand 'the why' of the ethical principles of their community, an understanding which both depends on a properly developed grasp of 'the that', and which legitimates the determination of 'the that' for the rulers themselves and for their *polis*.¹⁴⁶ Regarding the last point, there is, of course, the important difference that Aristotle deploys the idea of 'the that' to describe the ethical beliefs and practices of actual (properly run) communities, whereas Plato, in the *Republic*, has in view the dialectical and political role of rulers only in an ideal state. But this difference, while significant for some enquiries, does not affect the substance of my point here. This is that both Greek philosophers see ethical reflection as properly based on the reflective thinkers' participation in, and understanding of, the ethical beliefs of the relevant communities, and thus assume a different picture of the role of ethical reflection from that presupposed by Irwin (and Kant).

As so described, the reflective reasoning of the philosopher-rulers plays a role which is analogous to that of the poetic heroes. In the *Republic*, reflective reasoning seems to take the form of systematic dialogue or argument (not introspection) about the fundamental ethical principles of the community, conducted between those who are dispositionally and intellectually prepared to engage in this. The

¹⁴³ See 4.4 above, text to nn. 116–17 above.

¹⁴⁴ See *R.* 428c–d, 484b–d, 500c–501b, 519c–520c; also 412c–e, 413c–414b. On reason as both a function and a norm, see 4.3 above, text to n. 37.

¹⁴⁵ See *R.* 498d8–499a2, esp. 498e3. On the interpretative issues raised by such passages, see 4.6 below, text to nn. 189–203.

¹⁴⁶ See refs. in n. 144 above, and *R.* 401e–402c; also 4.4 above, text to nn. 112–19.

mode of dialogue envisaged is not deliberative in form but analytic.¹⁴⁷ The dialectician seeks to provide a definition of these principles, of a kind which can survive criticism by fellow-dialecticians with the same dispositional and intellectual preparation. The ideal dialectician is one who is able to 'give an account' of 'the essence (*ousia*) of each thing . . . to himself and to another'. A prerequisite of his having objective knowledge (*episteme*) of the Form of the Good is that he can 'define it in argument [*logos*], distinguishing [it] from everything else, and, as though in battle, surviving every critical analysis [*elenchos*], determined to analyse [*elenchein*] by reference to essence [or "being", *ousia*] not opinion [*doxa*] . . .'.¹⁴⁸ Although, obviously, what is envisaged is more systematic and abstract than anything to be found in Greek poetry, it can still be seen as fulfilling a similar function to that of the reflective reasoning of the problematic heroes: namely that of articulating the essential principles underlying the shared ethical life of the community.¹⁴⁹

The function of dialectic in the *Republic* can also be understood as a version of the Socratic project, as represented in Plato's early dialogues: that of a shared search (*συζήτησις*), through analytic question-and-answer, of objective definitions of key ethical ideas.¹⁵⁰ Plato, imagining this dialectic being practised under ideal conditions (different from those represented in the early dialogues), also imagines this project reaching the definitive, knowledge-based conclusions which are not reached in the early dialogues. He also makes Socrates emphasize in the *Republic* itself that the fact that the participants (including Socrates) have not had the kind of two-stage education in the kind of community described means that they too do not possess the kind of knowledge that they are trying to formulate.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ On the contrast implied between the account of dialectic offered here and Irwin's, see text to nn. 154–6 below.

¹⁴⁸ R. 534b–c, esp. b4–5, b7–c3. On the significance of the fact that the mode of analysis involved is dialectical, see Gadamer (1980), 113–23, (1988), 264–5; Gill (1992), 159–60; and text to nn. 150–3 below.

¹⁴⁹ See text to nn. 138–41 above; and see further 4.6 below, text to nn. 189–205, 223–5.

¹⁵⁰ On Socratic 'shared search', see e.g. *Charmides* 166c7–d6, *Grg.* 505e–506a, *Protagoras* (Prt.) 348c5–e1, *Meno* 80c6–d4; also Gill (1992), 156–8.

¹⁵¹ See R. 506c–e, Socrates is only able to provide 'beliefs without knowledge' (c6) about the Form of the Good (505a–b); and 532d–533a, only someone who has passed through the programme of dialectic described can state fully the kind of knowledge of truth that it would yield. See also R. 490e–501e (with the qualification noted in 496b–497a), and 517b–521b. See further Ferber (1989), 154–8, (1992), 144–6; and Gill

One of the ways in which the Socratic project is sometimes presented in the early dialogues is as an ethico-political one. His mode of cross-examination is offered as a means of articulating the shared truths underlying the belief-patterns of the fellow members of his community, or, at least, of providing the analytic basis for doing so.¹⁵² Under the circumstances portrayed in the early dialogues (and, by inference, in late fifth-century Athens itself), such claims could only be seen as massively contentious and paradoxical. The mismatch between the beliefs expressed in the dialogues and those general statements which (as Socrates argues) can survive analytic examination is evident.¹⁵³ But, under the ideal conditions for dialectic posited in the *Republic*, it is possible to conceive the Socratic type of dialectic as realizing its stated goal of encapsulating in general terms the ethical truths underlying the belief-patterns of the community, and embodied in its ethical discourse.

The preceding paragraphs (text to nn. 142–53 above) have sketched an interpretation of the *Republic's* conception of the role of dialectic which is designed to form a contrast with Irwin's account. Irwin presents Platonic reflection as introspective in form and deliberative in its objectives: the individual who engages in rational reflection modifies her life-shaping goals in the light of her developing conception of her ideal self.¹⁵⁴ I have stressed rather the idea that Platonic reflection is collaborative in form (an ideal version of Socratic 'shared search' through dialectic), and that it is directed at defining the ethical principles underlying the belief-patterns and life-forms of the (reason-ruled) community.¹⁵⁵ In other words, Irwin's account expresses an individualist-objectivist model of

(1993a), 61–2, 67–8. For another philosophically significant use of dialogue form by Plato, see 6.6 below, text to n. 181, and refs. in n. 181.

¹⁵² See e.g. *Ap.* 21a–23b, 29d–31a (Socrates' divine mission to Athens is to practise cross-examination, *elenchos*); *Grg.* 521d–522c (Socrates is the only person in Athens who practises the true art of politics).

¹⁵³ See further, on the methodology and truth-claims of Socratic dialectic, Vlastos (1983a), esp. 54–5 (1985); these appear in revised form as chs. 1–2 of Vlastos (1994).

¹⁵⁴ See text to nn. 121–37 above.

¹⁵⁵ Irwin, of course, recognizes the key role of dialectic in the second stage of the educational programme and the connections with Socratic dialectic (though also, as he emphasizes, certain differences from Socratic dialectic); see (1977), 220–6, (1995), ch. 16, esp. 262–4, 276–9. But in analysing the form and function of ethical reflection, he does so in terms of individual rational deliberation directed at self-realization (refs. in nn. 130, 134 above) rather than of the shared analysis of truths underlying communal life, as I do here.

ethical reflection, while my alternative account focuses on the connections between participation and ethical objectivism. My account has been designed both (1) to stress the links between participation (dialectical shared search) and the achievement of ethical objectivity in the second stage, and (2) to stress the links between this process and the development of objectively good character and beliefs through communal participation in the first stage.¹⁵⁶

The character of Plato's thinking on this point can be defined further by contrast with the anti-Kantian approaches of MacIntyre and Williams as well as with Irwin's broadly Kantian approach. In particular, this can clarify the relationship between the 'participant', or communal, aspect of Plato's thinking, and the objectivist aspect. In Chapter 1, I suggested that these thinkers can help us to recognize the validity of a conception of ethical motivation which is centred on the internalization of communal and interpersonal standards. I argued that, in this way, we can reach a better understanding of Greek poetic and philosophical patterns of thinking than that provided by Kantian ethical theory.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, I think that this aspect of their thinking can help us to understand Plato's view of the first stage of education, and of the role of this stage as a basis for the second stage, as well as the comparable aspects of Aristotelian ethical theory.¹⁵⁸ Although both thinkers mark the closeness of their thinking to Aristotle, in this respect,¹⁵⁹ they do not do so as regards Plato. In Williams's case, particularly, this reflects a different interpretation from that offered here of the nature and coherence of Plato's account of psycho-ethical development and its outcome.¹⁶⁰ Both thinkers are also aware of certain substantive differences between their thinking and Plato's on the scope of rational reflection and its role in ethical life. Noting these differences can serve to define the distinctive character of Plato's conception of the relationship between the communitarian and objectivist aspects of his

¹⁵⁶ A further topic that might have been relevantly explored is the significance of the nature of the ultimate goal of dialectic, the Form of the Good (R. 505a-b), and the idea that this conception of the goal, taken as part of the account of ideal dialectic, expresses an objectivist-participant framework of thinking. But to do so adequately would require a fuller and more technical discussion than I can offer here.

¹⁵⁷ See 1.3 above, text to nn. 110-25.

¹⁵⁸ See above 4.2, text to nn. 20-37; 4.4, text to nn. 106-19.

¹⁵⁹ See Introd., text to n. 24-5; 1.3, text to n. 127.

¹⁶⁰ See Williams (1973b), and (1993), 42-4.

ethical thinking, in a way that has implications for the understanding of comparable features of other Greek theories.¹⁶¹

Central to the argument of Williams's *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (1985) is a conviction that philosophers have overstated the ethical power of reflection. More precisely, Williams has two, connected, complaints. One is that philosophers have overstated the extent to which reflection, by itself, can make someone acquire properly ethical motivation. The other is that philosophers have overstated the extent to which ethical theory (in particular, the kind of theory that claims that it is *rational* to be ethically good) can make people good.¹⁶² Williams takes both these complaints to be applicable to Kant, and to certain post-Kantian (as well as some other modern) theories.¹⁶³ But he also sees Socrates and Plato, by (partial) contrast with Aristotle,¹⁶⁴ as liable to these criticisms. For instance, he describes as 'Platonic' the assumption 'that the reflective agent as theorist can make himself independent from the life and character he is examining', and can 'look critically at all [his] dispositions from the outside, from the point of view of the universe . . . without tacitly taking for granted a picture of the world more locally familiar than any that would be available from there'.¹⁶⁵ This characterization of what is 'Platonic' should be taken in conjunction with Williams's description of Plato's project in the *Gorgias* and *Republic* as that of meeting Socrates' 'demand to show to *each* person that justice is rational *for that person*', and doing so by grounding his answer 'in an account of what sort of person it was rational to be'.¹⁶⁶ Williams's scepticism about the ethical efficacy of reflective theory (including theory about what should count as 'rational') is also expressed in the

¹⁶¹ On links between Plato's thinking on this subject and other Greek theories, see below 4.6, text to nn. 177-225; 6.5, text to nn. 122-9.

¹⁶² I do not think that these two strands are always distinguished clearly in Williams (1985); but they are conceptually distinct parts of his argument.

¹⁶³ Williams (1985), ch. 4, including the comment on p. 69, cited in 4.3 above, text to n. 86; and pp. 100-4 (on Rawls). On the relevant modern theories, see below 5.3, text to nn. 68-74; 6.6, text to nn. 156-9.

¹⁶⁴ Williams (1985), 34-5, 39-40, with the partial qualification on Aristotle in 38-9.

¹⁶⁵ Williams (1985), 110; the comment forms part of a critique of Utilitarianism, and the phrase about 'the point of view of the universe' is taken from Sidgwick (p. 105). But the description of the assumption as 'Platonic', and the similarity to Williams's characterization of Kantian thinking, show that his critique has a more general application; see also 6.6 below, text to nn. 161-4. A similar (and similarly Kantian) picture of Platonic aspirations to the 'standpoint of perfection' or 'god's eye view' is given by Nussbaum (1986), 138, 154-8, 160-3.

¹⁶⁶ Williams (1985), 31, his italics; see also 22-8.

idea that there is no reason to think that the 'thick values' that guide ethical practice in a given community gain additional efficacy by being redescribed in the 'thin' (more general) categories of ethical theory, such as those of 'rationality' and 'personhood'.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, at one point, he suggests precisely the opposite: that, if reflection disturbs ethical understanding (at the pre-reflective level) without replacing it, then this leads to 'the notably un-Socratic conclusion that, in ethics, reflection can destroy knowledge'.¹⁶⁸

MacIntyre gives a rather more positive account of the role of reflection within ethical life, but with certain important limitations. In *After Virtue* (1985), MacIntyre presents reflection on such general questions as 'What is the good life for a human being?' as a valid and integral element of ethical life. However, he also insists that, if such reflection is to play a significant part in ethical life, it must be grounded in an understanding of virtue which is itself based on engagement with a nexus of interpersonal and communal activities and relationships. He also insists that, if such reflection is to have ethical validity, it must be conducted within, and in the light of, a determinate intellectual as well as ethical tradition.¹⁶⁹ This latter theme is developed in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988), in which MacIntyre underlines his belief in the impossibility of stepping wholly outside one's tradition and of taking up a neutral standpoint from which to gain objective knowledge of ethical truth. MacIntyre sees the ethical theories of Plato and Aristotle as valid examples of reflection, of increasing depth and complexity, within a determinate intellectual tradition. But he rejects the Platonic aspiration to objective understanding of human nature and rationality, except in so far as such aspirations are conceived as making up the intellectual horizon of a given tradition-based line of enquiry.¹⁷⁰

Reference to these views of MacIntyre and Williams can help us to

¹⁶⁷ Williams (1985), chs. 6–8, esp. 129–30, 140–8, and, on the category of 'person', 114–15.

¹⁶⁸ Williams (1985), 148, his italics. See also 18–21, esp. 21, where the Socratic claim that 'the unexamined life is not worth living' (Pl. *Ap.* 38a5–6) is taken as indicating that ethical knowledge can only be reached through critical reflection on one's ethical beliefs. For some more positive suggestions about the role of reflection in ethics, see Williams (1985), 152–5, discussed in Gill (1990c), 152–3.

¹⁶⁹ MacIntyre (1985), 128–9 (cited in 1.3 above, text to nn. 109–10), 186–7, 218–22, also 273–7; see also Gill (1990c), 153–5.

¹⁷⁰ MacIntyre (1988), 78–81, 98–101, 140–2, 144–5; also chs. 18–20, esp. 401–3. See further, on the views of MacIntyre and Williams on Greek and modern thinking about the scope and limits of ethical reflection, 6.5 below.

define more precisely the relationship between the communitarian and the objectivist dimension of Plato's thinking about the ethical role of reflection in the *Republic*. On the one hand, Plato insists, as strongly as Williams or MacIntyre, that valid ethical reflection (dialectic) must be grounded in the development of ethical dispositions through engagement with the practices, and the conception of the virtues, of a determinate community. On this point, Williams's criticisms of Plato seem more applicable to Kant, or to Kantian readings of the *Republic*, such as Irwin's, than to Plato, as interpreted here.¹⁷¹ On the other, I take it to be beyond question that Plato thinks that, if reflection is grounded in this way, as well as by a systematic intellectual and analytic programme of study, it can, in principle, lead to objective knowledge of ethical truth of a kind that is not limited in its application to a specific community or intellectual tradition.¹⁷² Indeed, these two points are closely interconnected in the argument and educational programme of the *Republic*. There is no route to the dialectic in which we can gain knowledge of the sun-like Form of the Good which does not pass through the cave in which we acquire our pre-dialectical beliefs. And we can only acquire the necessary basis of (reason-ruled) pre-dialectical beliefs in a cave where such beliefs are shaped by rulers who have gained objective knowledge of ethical truth.¹⁷³

4.6 WHY DO THE PHILOSOPHER-RULERS RE-ENTER THE CAVE?

Against the background of this account of the role of reflection, I take up a question which bears on Plato's understanding of the kind of psycho-ethical character produced by reflection under ideal conditions. This is the question why Plato presents the fully-trained philosopher-rulers as apparently reluctant, and needing to be

¹⁷¹ See 4.4 above, esp. text to nn. 106–19; and text to nn. 165–8 above. To put my point in Williams's terms, in so far as Plato advocates adopting 'the point of view of the universe', he also insists that we *cannot* do so 'without tacitly taking for granted a picture of the world more locally familiar than any that would be available from there' (1985, 110, cited in text to n. 165 above).

¹⁷² It is a separate, though related, question how far Plato thinks that human beings can ever attain fully to this ideal level of knowledge: see Gill (1992), 156–60 and (1993c).

¹⁷³ On this vicious (or virtuous) circle, see above, n. 119; also 4.4, text to nn. 115–19; text to nn. 140–6, 150–3; and Gill (1993b), 42–3, 61–2.

'compelled', to re-enter the cave of pre-reflective communal life to do their job of caring for the *polis* as a whole.¹⁷⁴ This is a problem for any interpretation of the ethical theory of the *Republic*.¹⁷⁵ Irwin deals with this problem by suggesting that Plato is mistaken about the implications of his theory, and by constructing an account of the role of reflection (based partly on other Platonic dialogues) which shows why the philosopher-rulers should be motivated positively towards doing this job. This solution, though drastic, is consistent with Irwin's (broadly) Kantian approach; the conceptual pattern, in which rational self-understanding is taken to generate other-benefiting motivation, is one whose philosophical roots are examined later.¹⁷⁶ I do not think that this kind of pattern matches the conception of psychological and ethical life expressed in the *Republic*. But I accept fully that Plato's seemingly paradoxical presentation of the attitude of the philosopher-rulers forces us to raise questions about the psycho-ethical state and motivation generated by rational reflection (dialectic) of the best possible type.

At the start of this chapter (p. 241), I presented the following statement as a key feature of the objective-participant conception of person:

To be human is to be the kind of animal whose psycho-ethical life (typically conceived as interplay or 'dialogue' between parts of the psyche) is, in principle, capable of being shaped so as to become fully 'reason-ruled' by (a) the action-guiding discourse of interpersonal and communal engagement and (b) reflective debate about the proper goals of a human life.

One of the questions to which this statement gives rise is that of how we should understand the relationship between (a) and (b). This question is the more pressing when, as in the case of the philosophers re-entering the cave, we seem to find a conflict between the ethical outcome of (a) (interactive engagement) and (b) (reflective debate). If, as I claim, the *Republic* is understood best as expressing an objective-participant conception of person,¹⁷⁷ it is important for me to show how this point can illuminate the interpretative crux of

¹⁷⁴ See nn. 227, 234–5 below.

¹⁷⁵ See e.g. Annas (1981), 266–71; C. D. Reeve (1988), 199–203.

¹⁷⁶ See 4.5 above, text to nn. 123–4; below, text to nn. 230–1; 5.3, text to nn. 67–74.

¹⁷⁷ Irwin's account, by implication, embodies the claim that the contrasting 'individualist' ideas are expressed in *R.*; see 4.1 above, text to nn. 4–5 and n. 5.

the philosophers' attitude to re-entering the cave as well as the (partly parallel) crux of the poetic psycho-ethical conflicts examined in the previous chapter.¹⁷⁸

First, I outline two possible models of the relationship between interactive engagement and reflective debate which can be found in Greek philosophy.¹⁷⁹ I then seek to place the *Republic's* thinking in relation to these models. In the first model, virtue is conceived as substantially the same in its pre-reflective and post-reflective forms. The principal role of reflective debate is to provide analytic (and, ideally, objectively true) understanding of the nature and basis of this (single) type of virtue, and so to confirm it. In the second model, the effect of reflective debate is to reshape the understanding of what virtue means, and thus to counteract, in significant respects, the outcome of interactive exchange. It does so in a way that makes a qualitative difference to the psycho-ethical state and the mode of life of those who engage in properly conducted reflective debate. Both models carry implications, of differing kinds, for the proper conduct of post-reflective interpersonal and communal relationships, including relationships with those who do *not* have post-reflective virtue. For instance, a key theme associated with the second model is the idea that the most profound way to benefit other people is to make them aware of the special kind of human happiness which is yielded by post-reflective virtue, even though this way of benefiting other people may not correspond with the pre-reflective understanding of what it means to benefit others. Determining which of these models is applicable to a specific Greek theory is not wholly straightforward. As becomes clear in the next chapter, the criteria relevant to this question intersect with issues which are important to Greek philosophers themselves as well as with those which are important to their modern interpreters. But it is useful, none the less, to outline these competing lines of thought in Greek philosophy, in order to provide a context in which to place the interpretative problems raised by the *Republic*.

One strand of Aristotle's ethical thinking is sometimes taken to represent a clear example of the first model. In *NE* 1. 7, for instance, Aristotle characterizes the life 'according to virtue' (*kat' areten*) as a

¹⁷⁸ On the relationship between this interpretative issue in *R.* and that raised by the poetic psycho-ethical conflicts, see 4.7 below.

¹⁷⁹ As becomes clear, the first model is rather more difficult to identify securely with specific Greek theories than the second.

distinctively human life, actualizing the constitutively human capacity for rationality. The kind of virtue that he has in mind includes, at least, the combination of ethical virtue and practical reasoning that is presented elsewhere as the outcome of interpersonal and communal engagement rather than of reflective debate. To this extent, reflective debate, as exemplified in *NE* 1. 7, has the role of providing an analytic account of a type of virtue produced by other means (including interactive exchange) rather than that of reshaping the pre-reflective conception of virtue.¹⁸⁰ Arguably, a broadly similar pattern can be found in Stoic thought. The crucial stage in ethical development, namely the recognition that virtue is the only real good and proper object of choice, and that the other so-called 'goods' are, in relation to virtue, matters of indifference, is not presented as depending on reflection.¹⁸¹ As I suggest later, it is a stage which may be conceived as developing out of proper forms of interpersonal and communal engagement.¹⁸² What reflection shows is that the life centred on this recognition is the natural life for a human being to lead. For instance, the order and regularity embodied in such a life can come to be understood as cognate with, and part of, the order and regularity of the *kosmos* as a whole.¹⁸³

The preceding comments on Aristotelian and Stoic theory are defensible, as far as they go, and serve to exemplify the first model of the role of reflection. But they do not represent a complete account of Aristotelian and Stoic thinking on this subject. Both the theories also express the idea that reflection, even when grounded in pre-reflective virtue, brings with it some enlargement or modification in the understanding of what virtue involves. For instance, the kind of reflection contained in Aristotle *NE* 10. 7–8 presents the 'human' life centred on ethical virtue as, ultimately, less valuable than the 'divine' life centred on philosophical contemplation. Although this conclusion builds on, and presupposes, the pre-reflective recognition of the value of ethical virtue, it also modifies this, and does so in

¹⁸⁰ See *NE* 1097^b22–1098^a18, esp. 27–18. To rephrase the point, reflective debate provides the analytic 'why' to explain a pre-developed 'that' (4.4 above, text to nn. 112–15). On this strand in Aristotle's thinking, see e.g. Burnyeat (1980); McDowell (1980). On virtually any account, the 'virtue' designated here includes the ethical virtue acquired by a grasp of the 'that'. On the question whether Aristotle's conception of happiness as a whole is an 'inclusive' or 'dominant' one, see text to n. 184 below; and 5.6, text to nn. 240–2.

¹⁸¹ See LS 59D, taken with Gill (1990c), 143–8.

¹⁸² See 5.4 below, text to nn. 220–4.

¹⁸³ See N. P. White (1979), 156–9, 165–78; and LS 63A–E.

a way that, if accepted, carries with it a modification in the mode of life adopted.¹⁸⁴ The Stoics do not, I think, draw the same conclusion. But Stoic theory does contain the idea, which some Stoic thinkers emphasize, that (for instance) the post-reflective recognition of the absolute priority of virtue over matters of indifference, or of the providential shaping of the universe and human action, brings with it a qualitative modification in the understanding of what 'virtue' is and how it should be expressed.¹⁸⁵

The latter features of Stoic, and more especially, of Aristotelian thinking bring us closer to the second model of thinking about the role of reflection. This model is also displayed, in a more radical or extreme form, in two Platonic dialogues other than the *Republic* and in Epicurean thinking. The *Phaedo*, for instance, contains the claim that only post-reflective virtue is virtue in a real sense. The philosopher's pursuit of wisdom (understood as objective knowledge of the Forms) brings with it a 'purification' from the fears and desires generated by the body. This purification constitutes real courage and temperance (*sophrosune*), whereas conventional or pre-reflective virtue consists simply in exchanging one (body-based) pleasure or pain for another.¹⁸⁶ Analogously, the 'mysteries' of Diotima in the *Symposium* convey the claim that it is only the 'ascent of desire' (in which the lover's pattern of desire is reshaped by post-reflective guidance) that yields 'true' temperance and other virtues.¹⁸⁷ Similarly, Epicurean thinking expresses the idea that the real or true virtues are those which are informed by the *Epicurean*, reflectively-based world-view, rather than by conventional thinking.¹⁸⁸

These two models of thinking about psycho-ethical states can also be correlated with patterns of thinking about the right way to treat other people in the light of a post-reflective understanding of virtue. These patterns of thinking can be couched (in line with the objective-participant theme cited earlier, text to n. 177 above) in terms of types of discourse. Cognate with the first model is the idea that a prime function of post-reflective debate is to analyse what is valid in the

¹⁸⁴ See further 5.6 below.

¹⁸⁵ Epictetus is sometimes thought to emphasize the first point and Marcus Aurelius the second: see e.g. Sandbach (1975), 166–7; Annas (1993), 160–2, 174–6. See also 5.7 below, text to nn. 360–4.

¹⁸⁶ *Phd.* 68c–69c, 83e–84a.

¹⁸⁷ *Smp.* 210a–212a, esp. 211d, 212a; on the crucial role of the post-reflective guide, see 5.7 below, text to nn. 310–20.

¹⁸⁸ 5.7 below, text to nn. 355–7.

psycho-ethical norms of pre-reflective discourse (or, alternatively, to ensure that these norms *are* valid and well-grounded). Cognate with the second model is the idea that the norms of pre-reflective discourse should be modified, or transformed, in the light of post-reflective debate, if the benefits of such debate are to be extended, at least in a preliminary way, to those who have not engaged in this.

There are features of the *Republic* that might seem to be interpreted best in terms of the first model, including the description of the outcome of the first stage of education (401a–402c), noted earlier. This stage is presented as developing the kind of ethical attitudes and emotions that will be confirmed when 'reason' comes and validates the 'kinship' (*οἰκειότης*) created in this way. This process is also presented as that of acquiring the pre-reflective ability to 'read' the concrete manifestations of the virtues (Plato's language suggests the idea of copies of the Forms) embodied in the art-works and social forms of the reason-ruled community.¹⁸⁹ It is plausible to connect this passage with the later comparison of the philosopher-rulers to artists who look up at the Forms of the virtues and who then 'mould' (*πλάττειν*) or 'blend' (like colours), communal practices and character (*ἥθος*), as well as their own, so as to match these Forms.¹⁹⁰ One may also note here the characterization of the philosopher-ruler as someone who is 'equalized' (*παρισωμένον*) and assimilated (*ὁμοιωμένον*) in virtue to the community that he rules.¹⁹¹

In thinking about the possible implications of these passages, it is worth bearing in mind that, in the account offered earlier, those trained by the first stage of education are 'reason-ruled' in the sense that their belief-based practical reasoning, as well as their aspirations and desires, are in line with 'reasonable' norms.¹⁹² The relevant beliefs may even include (pre-dialectical) ideas about the nature of the world of which human lives form a part.¹⁹³ In these respects, the structure of pre-reflective and post-reflective virtue may seem very similar. The only obvious difference, though a highly significant one, is that the philosopher's version of these virtues rests on dialectically based knowledge (*episteme*) rather than on the kind of opinion or

¹⁸⁹ See 4.4 above, text to nn. 103–5, esp. refs. in n. 103.

¹⁹⁰ R. 500b–501b, esp. 500d4–8, 501b1–5; also Ferrari (1989), 121–2.

¹⁹¹ R. 498e; see also 4.5 above, text to n. 145.

¹⁹² See 4.4 above, text to nn. 92–102. In this sense, people with pre-reflective virtue (as well as post-reflective virtue) are capable of 'taking care of' their lives and psycho-ethical states.

¹⁹³ See text to nn. 198–200 below.

belief (*doxa*) that derives from participation in the pre-dialectical discourse of a given community.¹⁹⁴ Thus, it might seem, the philosopher differs from the fully-trained auxiliary only in that she understands, analytically, the reason (in Aristotelian terms, 'the why') for the pattern of virtue that both types of person express, and that she uses this understanding to inform the pre-reflective discourse of the community.¹⁹⁵

To this extent, it may seem that Plato's thinking about the role of reflection corresponds to the first model outlined earlier. However, to see how far this line of thought can be taken, I consider the case of courage, a virtue of which Plato explicitly distinguishes pre-reflective and post-reflective versions.¹⁹⁶ As noted earlier, pre-reflective courage is defined as the 'preservation . . . of the belief [*doxa*] created by the law through education about what, and what sort of things, are to be feared'.¹⁹⁷ If we take the account of pre-reflective courage together with the preceding account of the first stage of education, it is clear that the type of beliefs involved go beyond statements of the kind 'situations of type *x* or *y* are to be feared'. Also cited, as relevant to promoting courage or its opposite, are general statements about the nature of life after death as well as specific comments by major heroic figures (presented as playing a normative role in the poems) which express the belief that the death of oneself or a friend is something terrible.¹⁹⁸ This point may be linked with the presentation of poetic and musical education as propagating general, life-shaping beliefs about the ethical character of the gods, both in themselves and in their interventions in human life, and about the connection—or lack of connection—between human happiness and virtue.¹⁹⁹ Contained within these latter

¹⁹⁴ On the knowledge-belief/opinion distinction, see e.g. R. 476d–480a; also 505a–506e, 517b–e, 518e–519a, 520c. For the claim that this distinction need not carry with it a radically divided 'two-worlds' view (and hence, that beliefs can be converted into knowledge), see e.g. Annas (1981), ch. 8.; Fine (1978), (1990).

¹⁹⁵ This sentence suggests one way of interpreting the passages in R. cited in text to nn. 189–91 above.

¹⁹⁶ R. 430c2–3, 'citizen's courage' (*politike andreia*); the reference in c4–5 seems to be to 486a8–b4. 500d7–8 suggests that there are 'popular' (*demotike*) versions of (at least) temperance and justice as well.

¹⁹⁷ R. 429c6–8; see 4.4 above, text to n. 98.

¹⁹⁸ R. 386a–387c, and 387d–388c (also 386c). On Plato's belief that heroic figures are treated as normative in Greek poetry and that they invite imitation, see 2.2. above, n. 20. On the psychological model involved, see text to nn. 202, 205 below.

¹⁹⁹ R. 379a–383b, esp. 379d–380c, and 392a–b, taken with Halliwell (1984), 53–5; Ferrari (1989), 111–12.

passages is the idea that the 'falsehoods' uttered by poets about 'the greatest things [*τὰ μέγιστα*] in human life' promote 'falsehood in the psyche', that is, 'being deceived ... about the most important things' (*τὰ κυριώτατα*), a condition which has adverse effects on the whole personality.²⁰⁰

In gauging the significance of this set of passages, it may be useful to hold in mind the general claims made earlier (4.4 above) about the psycho-ethical effect of the first stage of education. I take Plato's account of this stage as reflecting the pervasive Greek philosophical (and poetic) view that human emotions and desires are, characteristically, shaped by beliefs and reasoning. The presentation of the defective types in Books 8–9 of the *Republic* suggests that Plato sees human beings generally as capable of a certain type of reflective, or 'second-order' reasoning (involving reasoning about what kind of human life is most desirable), which shapes the resulting pattern of belief-based emotions and desires.²⁰¹ The role of the first stage of education in promoting the kind of beliefs (including general, life-shaping, beliefs) that produce 'citizen's' courage (430c) can be placed against this background. On this basis, we might offer the following account of the relationship between citizen's and philosopher's courage. Both types consist in the possession of 'reason-ruled' psycho-ethical harmony, but, whereas the first depends on beliefs, including beliefs about human life and its place in the *kosmos*, acquired by participation in conventional discourse, the second depends on knowledge, yielded by the kind of systematic dialectic that (for Plato) constitutes the only mode of reflection that is capable of achieving knowledge of objective truth. In this account, the general beliefs propagated in the first stage of education constitute pre-dialectical versions of the truths (about 'the most important things') grasped in analytic form through dialectic.²⁰² This account fits the picture of the two-stage educational programme offered earlier, in which pre-reflective beliefs and the associated psycho-ethical harmony are *both* essential prerequisites for properly con-

²⁰⁰ R. 392a13–b1, 382a–b, esp. a7–8, taken with Gill (1993b), 44–6.

²⁰¹ See 4.2 above, text to nn. 34–65; for the point that the choices of the defective figures involve beliefs about which kind of human life is most desirable, see text to nn. 60–3 above. On this pervasive Greek philosophical and poetic psychological model, see above 1.2, text to nn. 72–6; 3.1, text to nn. 12–14.

²⁰² On 'the most important things', see text to n. 200 above; and, on the second stage, e.g. R. 505a–b, 517c–e, 519c, 520c; see also 4.5 above, text to nn. 147–9.

ducted dialectic *and* are (under ideal conditions) informed by the shaping direction of post-dialectical knowledge.²⁰³

The comments on post-dialectical courage that form part of the characterization of the 'philosophical nature'²⁰⁴ might seem to support this view, at least to some extent. We are told that the philosopher's attempt to grasp 'the permanent totality of things, both divine and human', and to survey 'all time and all reality' means that he will not 'think that human life is something important' (*μέγα τι*). Thus, he will not think that death is 'something terrible' (*δεινόν τι*) and will not have a cowardly nature (*δειλὴ ... φύσει*, R. 486a5–b3). This account of courage is parallel in structure to that of pre-dialectical courage as summarized earlier. In both cases, a set of general beliefs (in the philosopher's case, knowledge) about the natural order in which human life occurs informs the shaping of emotions in a way that helps to make someone brave or cowardly.²⁰⁵ The underlying model can be seen as that in which dialectic, if grounded in pre-dialectical 'harmonization' of the psyche, provides a fully analysed (and objectively true) theoretical basis for the pre-reflective world-view which, under ideal circumstances, underlies non-philosophical courage.

I think that, up to a point, the *Republic* does embody this model of the relationship between pre-dialectical and post-dialectical virtue. But the model is more complex than I have suggested so far. Also, one of the factors that makes it more complex introduces certain tensions even in the more complex version of the first model. The factor that I have in mind is that certain passages in the *Republic* seem consistent rather with the second model outlined earlier, in which post-dialectical knowledge transforms, rather than consolidates, pre-dialectical virtue.

For instance, the temperance (*sophrosune*) of the philosophical nature is analysed in this way. The intensity of the philosopher's desire (*epithumia*) for knowledge is such as to cause a corresponding

²⁰³ See above, text to nn. 189–91; 4.4, text to nn. 115–19; 4.5 above, text to nn. 171–3.

²⁰⁴ R. 485a–487a, esp. 486a–b. The virtues are not presented as, explicitly, 'post-dialectical', since the account of dialectic and the associated images of post-dialectical knowledge come later in the argument, 505a–521b and 531d–534e. But the account of the virtues given here implies the outcome of the type of dialectic described subsequently, and is compatible with e.g. 583b–587a, discussed in text to nn. 209–13 below.

²⁰⁵ See text to nn. 198–203 above. Cf. R. 387d6, 8, the good (*ἐπιεικής*) person will not think that death is 'terrible' (*δεινόν*) with 486a5–b3, esp. a9–10, b1.

diminution of the body-based desires associated elsewhere with the *epithumetikon* part of the psyche. Therefore, the philosopher will be temperate (*sophron*) in the sense that her pattern of desire is directed predominantly away from sensual and material pleasures (485d–e). In the first stage of education, by contrast, temperance is analysed by reference to the idea that patterns of belief and aspiration, if developed according to 'reasonable' norms, can shape in a corresponding way the body-linked responses of pleasure and pain, desire and fear.²⁰⁶ The later passage (485d–e) depends on the rather different ideas: (1) that there are desires (*epithumiai*) associated with the rational part of the psyche (specifically for knowledge, ultimately of a post-dialectical kind); and (2) that human beings have a single flow (*rheuma*) of desire (*epithumia*), and that an increase in one diminishes that in another.²⁰⁷ Relatedly, R. 486a–b suggests that the philosopher's knowledge of 'all time and all reality' (a8–9) provides a quite different type of motivational basis for courage from that available to the auxiliaries, and one that, by analogy with the case of temperance, may be more complete in its elimination of fear.²⁰⁸

The general claim implied here is that the philosopher's desire to gain dialectically based (and, ultimately, objectively true) knowledge, his experience of such knowledge, and the content of such knowledge transform his psycho-ethical structure and provide an independent motivation for virtue. A similar claim is implied in the arguments of Book 9 about the relative merits of the three pleasures that are correlated with the three psychic functions (R. 580d–587b). A key point in these arguments is that it is the philosopher alone who is in a position to recognize that a more 'real' pleasure comes from knowledge of what is more 'real' (that is, 'that which is always the same and immortal and truth') than comes from the transient and relativized physical experiences which are the goal of body-based desires.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ See 4.4 above, text to nn. 94–7.

²⁰⁷ The first idea is, in effect, that 'reason' is a mode of desire as well as a function and a norm. See further refs. in nn. 32, 47 above, 4.2 above, text to n. 37, and text to n. 212 below. See also e.g. Annas (1981), 141–2; Sorabji (1993), 67. On the second idea, see Price (1990), 254–6, and, more generally, refs. in n. 48 above.

²⁰⁸ R. 485d6–e1 does not claim that the body-based desires (and, presumably, fears, 486b1–4) linked with the *epithumetikon* part, 439d6–8, are totally eliminated (nor does 586e–587a), and such a claim might be incompatible with 571b–572b. But a more complete modification of desires and fears seems to be envisaged in 485d–486b than in 441e–442d (see 4.4 above, text to nn. 93–7).

²⁰⁹ R. 581b, 582b–d, 585c1–2 (quoted in text), 585d–586b.

The psycho-ethical pattern that is the outcome of this process is indicated in this passage:

when the personality [*psuche*] as a whole follows the lead of the philosophical part and does not cause internal strife, it is open to each part to do its own job and be just in other respects, and also for each part to enjoy the pleasures that are most appropriate to it [literally, 'its own'] and that are the best, and, as far as possible, the truest. (R. 586e4–587a1)

In this passage, the substitution of 'the philosophical part' for (what we would expect) 'the rational' (*to logistikon*) is rather unexpected, and is one of the features that has made some scholars claim that Plato here confuses (or slides illegitimately between) the practical functions of psyche and the contemplative.²¹⁰ On any interpretation, there is some shorthand here, but also, I think, an intelligible line of thought. The thought is similar to Aristotle's idea that, in the best possible psycho-ethical state, practical reason shapes long-term, life-shaping deliberation with a view to maximizing the opportunities for contemplative wisdom, which is presented as the best possible human (or 'divine') activity.²¹¹ In more Platonic terms, the psyche functions in the best (most 'reason-ruled' way) when the practical functions of reason (including taking care of the psyche as a whole) are shaped by the goal of realizing the best possible function (and desire) of reason, that of achieving post-dialectical knowledge.²¹² This mode of rational direction brings with it a reshaping of the pleasures associated with the other parts of the psyche in a way that may be indicated by the characterization of the temperance of the philosophical nature.²¹³

²¹⁰ See e.g. Annas (1981), 310–14; Irwin (1977), 338–9 n. 62. See Irwin's more sympathetic reading of the argument in (1995), 291–4, summarized in n. 133 above.

²¹¹ See 5.6 below, text to nn. 278–85.

²¹² In this analysis, 'reason' appears as a set of functions (including practical reasoning based on belief/knowledge and gaining knowledge), as a norm, and as a mode of desire (the desire to fulfil the best possible function of reason). See further 4.2 above, text to nn. 32–7, and n. 207 above. On the practical functions of reason as including 'taking care of the psyche as a whole', see e.g. R. 441e4–5, 442c5–8. This analysis is not dissimilar from that of Irwin (1995), 291–4, esp. 293 (see n. 133 above), except that I stress the outcome of practical reasoning about life-goals rather than the valuation of reason's capacity for deliberation.

²¹³ See text to nn. 206–7 above. An alternative picture, which may perhaps fit better with the idea of the proper management of all three types of desire for pleasure (R. 586e), is a version of the 'persuasion' of desires envisaged in R. 554c12–d2 (4.2, text to n. 13 above), in which the desires of the other two parts are reshaped (as well as reduced) by the dominance of the goal of philosophical knowledge; for the latter idea, see also n. 205 above.

These features of the *Republic's* presentation of post-dialectical virtue seem to bring us close to the *Phaedo's* claim that the only real virtues (including courage and temperance) are those based on the recognition of the supreme value of philosophical knowledge.²¹⁴ This point of resemblance is stressed by Martha Nussbaum in her account of the ethical psychology of the *Republic*. She sees these, and some other, Platonic dialogues as validating a 'divine' (post-dialectical) perspective in a way that involves the radical devaluation of the pre-dialectical or 'human' perspective.²¹⁵ Writing in a study of Greek poetry and philosophy that is presented explicitly as an application, and development, of Williams's ethical philosophy, she tends (like Williams) to see the Plato of the *Republic* as the exponent of a quasi-Kantian ideal of impersonal moral rationality.²¹⁶

I think that Nussbaum's reading of the *Republic* understates the features of Plato's argument which are compatible with the first model, in which pre-dialectical virtue is presented as a necessary preliminary for post-dialectical virtue and as validated by dialectic.²¹⁷ However, she does fasten on significant features of Plato's argument, which make it difficult to see the *Republic* as a whole as an expression of the first model of the relationship between pre-dialectical and post-dialectical virtue.²¹⁸ On the other hand, if we adopt the second model, we need to do so in a form that does not involve the radical devaluation of pre-dialectical virtue, and that

²¹⁴ See text to n. 186 above.

²¹⁵ Nussbaum (1986), 138–9, 141–2, 153–8. Her synthesis of parts of different Platonic dialogues (including *Grg.*, *Phd.*, and *Phlb.*, as well as *R.*) in (1986), ch. 5, is, arguably, at odds with her stress on the importance of Plato's decision to write in the form of distinct and exploratory dialogues rather than of systematic treatises, pp. 126–9. For similar problems in Irwin's (1977) synthesizing treatment of early and middle Platonic dialogues, see Roochnik (1988) and Gill (1979). On the larger significance of Plato's use of dialogue form, see Ch. 6 n. 181.

²¹⁶ See e.g. Nussbaum (1986), 163 (Plato and Kant), and, on her general philosophical and interpretative position, critical of Kant and developing Williams's approach, see 4–8, 18–19. On Williams's reading of *Pl. R.*, see 4.5 above, text to nn. 162–8; 6.6 below, text to nn. 161–4.

²¹⁷ See text to nn. 189–203 above. To put the point more broadly, Nussbaum tends to contrast the idealization of the 'divine' perspective in *Pl. R.* (and other dialogues) with Aristotle's approach, in which philosophy validates, rather than seeking to transform, the pre-reflective ethical standpoint: see Nussbaum (1986), refs. in n. 215 above; 162–3, 291–4, also 255–8. This understates *both* Plato's emphasis on the foundational role of pre-reflective virtue (4.4 above, text to nn. 106–19) and Aristotle's advocacy of the 'divine' (post-reflective) standpoint in *NE* 10. 7–8, noted but de-emphasized by Nussbaum (1986), 373–7 (see further 5.6 below).

²¹⁸ On the first model, see text to n. 179 above, applied to *Pl. R.* in text to nn. 189–203.

accommodates the role of dialectic in validating pre-dialectical virtue (in a way that is not true of, for instance, Plato's *Phaedo* or *Symposium*).²¹⁹ What we require, if it is conceptually available, is some type of synthesizing or intermediate model, which incorporates the deepened and modified character of post-dialectical virtue without negating the complementary (and independent) relationship between pre- and post-dialectical virtue.

Is such a synthesizing model conceptually available, and, if so, does it account for the full range of the *Republic's* thinking about the relationship between pre- and post-dialectical virtue? I think that it is possible to provide a model of this type which covers all the capacities and functions allocated to both types of virtue in the *Republic*.²²⁰ But I also think that there are difficulties in providing a wholly coherent picture of the type of motivation that corresponds to the full range of functions associated with post-dialectical virtue. In particular, given the emphasis, in *R.* 484–5 and 583–7, on the way in which the recognition of the value of post-dialectical knowledge transforms one's whole pattern of motivation, it is difficult to see why someone so transformed should be motivated to pursue any other objective.²²¹ I think that Plato acknowledges both these points, and that the second one, in particular, is highlighted in his presentation of the attitude of the philosopher-rulers towards re-entering the cave. This point does not invalidate the synthesizing account of the relationship between pre- and post-dialectical virtue, nor does it invalidate Plato's theory (as interpreted in the light of this account); but it does indicate the tensions to which it gives rise. As I underline later, the tensions to which the theory gives rise illustrate the psycho-ethical thinking (the conception of personality) involved in the theory.²²²

²¹⁹ See text to nn. 186–7 above, also n. 188, on Epicurean thinking. Aristotle's position in *NE* 10. 7–8 (taken in the context of *NE* as a whole), summarized in text to n. 184 above and discussed in 5.6 below, goes some way in this direction, but without the complications associated with Plato's complex political-cum-psyche framework in *R.*

²²⁰ What is required is a model in which (1) pre-dialectical virtue is valid *both* in itself (at its level) *and* as a necessary preliminary to post-dialectical virtue; and (2) post-dialectical virtue is *both* grounded in pre-dialectical virtue *and* constitutes a significantly deepened, and thus modified, version of this; and also (3) post-dialectical knowledge *both* validates pre-dialectical virtue (at its level) *and* informs this with its deepened understanding.

²²¹ At least, it is so in any model of ethical motivation that we can apply plausibly to Plato's theory; on this point, see text to nn. 230–42 below.

²²² See further 4.7 below, text to nn. 268–80.

As regards the functions of post-dialectical virtue, Plato indicates in *R.* 500–1 that he sees the person with the philosophical nature, in the right political context, as able, by his understanding of ordered and permanent realities (including the Forms of the virtues) both to become 'divine' and 'ordered' (*kosmios*) in a special way and to mould the practices of his community, as well as himself, in line with his knowledge of the Forms.²²³ Applying this model to the virtue of courage, we might modify the points made earlier about pre- and post-dialectical courage in this way. We should say that it is precisely by providing a more fully analysed (and objectively true) world-view, and by thus enabling a more complete psycho-ethical harmony, that post-dialectical knowledge both substantiates and sets standards for pre-dialectical courage. For instance, the post-dialectical knowledge of 'the permanent totality of things, both divine and human' (*R.* 486a5–6) can be seen as substantiating the pre-dialectical (reason-ruled) world-view by providing a better grounded account of pre-dialectical ideas about cosmic order and objective ethical standards.²²⁴ Although, as this passage indicates, the courage that derives directly from post-dialectical knowledge is more complete in the psycho-ethical 'harmony' produced, the structure of both virtues is fundamentally the same, and so post-dialectical courage can be seen both as a deepened version of pre-dialectical virtue, and as setting standards for it.²²⁵

²²³ *R.* 500b–501b, esp. 500c2–d1, d4–8, 501b1–c2. Notice that the practices or character (*ἡθῆ*) moulded in this way become 'beloved of god as far as is admissible' (501c1–2, *εἰς ὅσον ἐνδέχεται θεοφιλή*), just as the philosopher himself becomes 'divine, as far as is possible for a human being' (500d1, *θεῖος εἰς τὸ δυνατόν ἀνθρώπων*).

²²⁴ This is to combine the points made in text to nn. 196–200 and nn. 204–5 above. The suggestion is that knowledge of the Forms (centred on the Form of the Good) and of the associated world-order provides a post-dialectical version of the picture of the afterlife, and of the role of the gods, which ensures that death is not regarded as 'something terrible'. The thought may be (roughly) that, in an ethically (providentially?) ordered *kosmos*, death is not appropriately regarded as a bad thing. For the idea of a pre-reflective vehicle of (what can be grasped analytically as) truths, see Gill (1993b), 52–5, on the 'noble falsehood' of *R.* 414b–415d. The idea that action-guiding communal discourse should be pervaded by pre-reflective ethical virtues (including those relating to the conception of the *kosmos*) is developed much further in *Pl. Lg.* (see esp. Book 10, and Laks (1990), Bobonich (forthcoming), and Gill (1995), 303–4); but it is also indicated in *R.* 400d–402c, see text to nn. 189–90 above.

²²⁵ See text to nn. 196–9, 201–5, above. The point that post-dialectical courage sets the standards for pre-dialectical courage is not made explicitly, but seems implied by the combination of the two claims that the philosopher (1) sets standards for the pre-dialectical virtues (*R.* 500–1, n. 223 above) and (2) embodies the virtues (including courage) in a specially well-grounded way (484–5).

In presenting the return of the philosopher-rulers to the cave, Plato, similarly, indicates that they have all the capacities needed to carry out the functions required in this model. Having absorbed, to an exemplary degree, the highest standards of pre-dialectical virtue, they are now enabled, by their post-dialectical knowledge of the Form of the good, to inform, in a well-grounded way, the ethical and political lives of those living by pre-dialectical standards.²²⁶ On the other hand, Plato also highlights, unmistakably, the point that there is some question about whether people so prepared will be fully motivated towards performing the latter part of their function. The point is reiterated that they must be 'compelled' to re-enter the cave.²²⁷ This emphasis is puzzling because the language of 'compulsion' seems to be at odds with what one might otherwise expect to be the reactions of the philosopher-rulers to the prospect of doing their job of taking care of the *polis* as a whole.²²⁸ It is also at odds with the fact that the philosopher-rulers are said, when given good reason to do so, to be 'not unwilling' (or, even, by implication, 'keen') to do this job.²²⁹

As noted earlier, Irwin (1977) responds to this puzzle by arguing that Plato has misunderstood the implications of his own theory, and by reconstructing a pattern of motivation (based on the idea of rational self-understanding) according to which the philosopher-rulers will, indeed, be motivated positively towards doing their job. Plato 'mistakenly suggests that the philosopher will want to stay contemplating the Forms and will not voluntarily undertake public service' (242). Irwin insists, by contrast, that the effect of 'contemplation of the Forms' must be to make the philosopher 'want to embody the virtues in his own and other people's lives for its own sake' (*ibid.*).²³⁰ As I argue in the next chapter, in reconstructing the

²²⁶ See *R.* 412c–e, 413c–414b, 503a–b, taken with text to nn. 189–91 above; and 519b–d, 520c.

²²⁷ *R.* 519c8–d7, e4, 520a8–9, c1, e2, 521b7–10 (also 499b5, 500d4).

²²⁸ *R.* 520b5–c6; see also refs. in nn. 234–5 below.

²²⁹ *R.* 520d6–8, b3–4.

²³⁰ See also Irwin (1977), 243: 'Plato's argument requires him to accept the practical view of the philosopher as a virtuous man who values virtuous action for itself.' See text to nn. 176 above; and 4.5 above, text to n. 124. Irwin (1995) gives a significantly modified version of this thesis, allowing that Plato's presentation implies the preferability of contemplation, but not at the expense of failing to perform 'just action required by principles of justice that demand action for the common good and proper return for the benefits one has received' (300, see also 298–301 and n. 239 below). However, as in (1977), he draws on *Smp.* to construct a line of argument showing that

required pattern of motivation, Irwin presupposes that properly virtuous motivation is that which is animated by the wish to benefit others (to display altruism), above all other objectives.²³¹

On the face of it, Plato explains the philosopher-rulers' motivation to re-enter the cave in terms of 'justice' (though, as I suggest shortly, this is not a complete explanation of the ethical pattern involved). When the philosophers see the reason why they should do so (expressed in the imagined dialogue with the founding lawgivers of the ideal state, 520a–d), then, despite the talk of 'compulsion' elsewhere, 'surely they won't refuse . . . or be unwilling to take their turn in joining the work [*ἀπειθήσουσιν . . . οὐκ ἐθέλησουσιν συμπονεῖν . . . ἐν μέρει*] in the city'. They will respond in this way because 'we shall be making a just demand of just people' (*dikaia . . . dikaios*).²³² This comment does not only allude to the first (highly traditional) definition of justice (*dikaioisune*) considered in the *Republic*, that of 'paying back what is due (*ὀφειλόμενα*) to each person'.²³³ It also evokes one of the central ideas of the *Republic*, that justice in the ideal *polis* is constituted by each person doing 'his own job', that is, the job for which he is suited by nature and training.²³⁴ The 'just' demand which the philosopher-rulers accept is that they should 'do their job' in acting as the rational part of the community by exercising their distinctive (and actualized) capacity for applying their dialectically based ethical knowledge in shaping the life of the community.²³⁵

But the question remains: on what model of ethical motivation should we understand the willingness of the philosopher-rulers to respond to the 'just' demand? Is it on the model of the recognition of the overriding priority of other-benefiting motivation proposed by

the philosopher-rulers must be motivated positively towards other-benefiting action as a way of realizing their own happiness (301–14, esp. 312–13).

²³¹ See 5.2 below, esp. text to nn. 20–9; also his definitions of 'moral' principles in (1977), 250, summarized in 4.3 above, text to n. 74.

²³² R. 520d6–e1. The point is both (1) that the demand is just (underlined in 519d8, 520a6) and (2) that the philosopher-rulers, being just people and recognizing its justice, will respond positively to this demand.

²³³ R. 331e3–4; see Irwin (1977), 243.

²³⁴ R. 433a–c (also 428a–429a), and, for the corresponding principle in the psyche, 443c–444b. The close linkage between justice and unity posited in R. (e.g. 443e, 444b, also 422e–423b) is also referred to in 519c–520a, esp. 520a4 (esp. *sundesmos*, 'binding together' the city).

²³⁵ R. 520b5–c6, also e.g. 473d–e, 499b, 500b–501b. See further 4.5 above, text to nn. 142–5; text to nn. 189–205, 220 above.

Irwin, or on some other model? I think that here, as in a number of other ethical questions in Greek philosophy, the most appropriate model is a version of the ethics of reciprocity discussed earlier in connection with Homer's *Iliad*.²³⁶ It is implausible to think that the Homeric ethical framework survived intact until the fourth century BC. But there is good reason to think that many of the attitudes and ideas associated with the Homeric ethics of reciprocity persisted until this period or later, in a way that co-existed with the emergence of ethical attitudes centred on the *polis*.²³⁷

The ethics of reciprocity, rather than of altruism, seem relevant here partly because the key ethical response, the philosopher-rulers' acceptance of the 'just demand' made of them, is presented as an act of reciprocal exchange. Unlike philosophers in other communities, the philosopher-rulers in the ideal state should 'be keen [*προθυμείσθαι*] to pay back [*ἐκτίνειν*] the cost of their upbringing [*τὰ τροφεῖα*]', which has made them uniquely capable of looking after themselves and the city by developing the dual capacities for dialectic and government.²³⁸ This response seems better explained as an attitude associated with a *polis*-centred version of the (mutually benefiting) relationship of generalized reciprocity than as an attitude which expresses the desire to benefit others for its own sake.²³⁹ Also, the Homeric parallel goes some way towards explaining two seemingly opposed features of Plato's presentation: (1) the idea that the philosopher-rulers need to give up something valuable in order to meet the demands placed on them; and (2) the idea that they are willing to do so (without denying the loss entailed) as an act of reciprocation.²⁴⁰ Analogously, in the Homeric context,

²³⁶ See 2.6 above, text to nn. 128–30, 5.3 below, text to nn. 78–83, and Gill (1998a), esp. 313–17.

²³⁷ See Millett (1989), esp. 41–3; and, more generally, Gill, Postlethwaite, and Seaford (1998).

²³⁸ R. 520b4–c1. The idea that justice consists in reciprocal exchange between parties with complementary needs is well embedded in the argument of R.; see e.g. 371e–372a, and refs. in n. 234 above. For the idea that the parent–child relationship constitutes a set of reciprocal exchanges, see e.g. Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes* 16–20, E. *Med.* 1024–35 (on the latter passage; see 2.9 above, text to n. 258).

²³⁹ The relationship between philosopher-rulers and the city as a whole is especially comparable with the Homeric relationship between chieftains and people rather than between chieftains: see 2.6 above, text to nn. 127–35. Irwin (1995), 314, also refers to the idea of reciprocity between sections of the community, but does so in the context of an interpretation of the philosopher-rulers' motivation centred on the development of altruism (as the highest form of self-realization); see n. 230 above.

²⁴⁰ For these two features, see: (1) R. 519d–520a, the point underlined by Glaucon's

both Sarpedon and Achilles express, in different ways, the cost (the risk to their lives, or the loss of a peaceful way of life), required by their participation in the chieftain-people or chieftain-chieftain relationship.²⁴¹ But both also signal their willingness, in principle, to do so, as a generous gesture, provided that the gesture is made in a context of properly reciprocated acts and attitudes.²⁴²

But, even if the parallel with the ethics of reciprocity as exemplified in Homer is a valid one, it does not, by itself, explain Plato's repeated stress on the idea that the philosopher-rulers must be 'compelled' to re-enter the cave.²⁴³ The latter stress reflects clearly a number of features in Plato's argument. These include the logical 'necessity' involved in working out the implications of Plato's innovative conception of philosophers-*cum*-rulers,²⁴⁴ and the idea that the only good rulers are those who rule reluctantly, rather than those who regard rule as an end in itself (or as a means to their own private ends).²⁴⁵ But the latter idea depends, in turn, on what I take to be Plato's main objective in stressing the 'necessity' or 'compulsion' required to make the philosopher-rulers re-enter the cave.

I noted earlier that Plato's characterization of the virtues of the philosophical nature, like the arguments on pleasure, depends on the thesis that post-dialectical knowledge of objective truth (taken, in the *Republic*, to centre on the Form of the Good) constitutes the

interjection in 519d8-9, also 519c4-6, 520d2-7, 520e4-521a4, b9-10; and (2) 520b4 'be keen' (*προθυμείσθαι*), d7, 'will not be unwilling' (*ἐθέλησουσιν*).

²⁴¹ In *Il.* 12. 310-28, the preferability (if it were available) of an immortal peaceful life (322-5) or, by implication, one of undisturbed status and prosperity (310-14) is indicated by Sarpedon, despite his ready commitment to fight to deserve such status and prosperity (315-21, 326-8). In Achilles', more mordant, speech, the cost of reciprocal risk-taking is more strongly marked (e.g. in 9. 321-33) and contrasted to what is (under present circumstances) the more desirable life of peaceful prosperity in Phthia (363-7, 412-26).

²⁴² See 2.6 above, text to nn. 131-3; 2.7 above, text to nn. 142-6; 2.8 above, text to nn. 188-94.

²⁴³ See refs. in n. 227 above. The idea of ethical 'compulsion' is, indeed, at odds with the emphasis on the voluntary or generous gesture in the Homeric version of the ethics of reciprocity (see 2.7 above, text to nn. 156, 186); on the Platonic analogue to the latter emphasis, see n. 240 above, refs. in (2).

²⁴⁴ If there are to be such rulers, they *must* ('be compelled') to go up and gain knowledge of the Form of the good (519c9-10), and then they *must* ('be compelled') to come down and express their knowledge into action (520a8, 521b7, also 519c8-d7). For *anagke* used to express what is 'necessary' or 'required' by a certain line of thought, see also 519b7, 520d3. For the idea of philosophers-*cum*-rulers as a highly innovative one, see R. 473d-474b.

²⁴⁵ R. 520d2-4, 520e4-521a8.

highest possible mode of human happiness.²⁴⁶ Plato's stress on this point, in connection with post-dialectical virtue (R. 485-6), might seem to jeopardize the role which Plato also allocates to dialectic, of validating, and explaining the reason for, pre-dialectical virtue (R. 401-2, 500-1). But it is possible to bridge this potential gap by seeing post-dialectical knowledge as deepening and modifying, but not therefore invalidating, pre-dialectical virtue.²⁴⁷ In presenting the philosopher-rulers' return to the cave, by contrast, Plato emphasizes a different, but related, gap: that between the motivation to achieve post-dialectical knowledge and to put such knowledge into practice in caring for the *polis* as a whole. Although Plato also provides a means of bridging this gap (in the reciprocal response to a just demand discussed earlier),²⁴⁸ the fact that he underlines the potential gap at all is striking. What he is, presumably, signalling in this way is the point that dialectically based knowledge of objective truth (taken here to culminate in knowledge of the Form of the Good) is the highest mode of human happiness;²⁴⁹ and he is prepared to acknowledge that this point is one which carries some risk for the coherence of his crucial innovative idea of a philosopher-*cum*-ruler.

Does Plato's larger framework of argument in the *Republic* allow us to go further in bridging this gap than he himself does in 520a-e (without going so far as to eliminate the gap altogether, as Irwin (1977) does)?²⁵⁰ I see one possible way of doing so, by developing a point made earlier about post-dialectical virtue and the management of pleasure.²⁵¹ A key point to bear in mind is that those who are selected to be philosopher-rulers are naturally disposed to care for the community as a whole, and have shown, in the course of their education, that this inclination has become integral to their character.²⁵² It seems to follow, then, that Plato sees no fundamental inconsistency between (1) being disposed to care for the community as a whole, and (2) forming a dialectically based world-view in which other-benefiting virtuous action is not seen as the highest human

²⁴⁶ See text to nn. 206-13 above.

²⁴⁷ See text to nn. 220, 223-5 above.

²⁴⁸ See text to nn. 232-42 above.

²⁴⁹ For this point, see refs. in n. 240 above, (1) and 519c4-5: those who have experienced philosophy come to regard it as like 'being transplanted [*ἀπικισθαι*] to the islands of the blessed'.

²⁵⁰ See text to nn. 230-1 above.

²⁵¹ See text to nn. 206-13 above; also n. 257 below.

²⁵² R. 412c-e, 413c-414b, 428b-d, 503a-b.

activity. But how can Plato fail to see these two points as inconsistent? A possible solution to the problem is this. A crucial part of the way that the philosopher-rulers exercise their care for the community is by guiding it in the light of their understanding of the truth (as Plato sees it) that the possession of objective ethical knowledge is the highest human function, and one that is higher than knowledge-based virtuous action.²⁵³ It is not only the philosopher-rulers' knowledge of objective ethical truth but also their recognition of the superior status of the possession of such knowledge that constitutes the wisdom that entitles them to 'shape' the community in the light of the 'divine' understanding of the permanent truths of reality.²⁵⁴ It follows, in a paradox which the *Republic* seems to underline, that the philosopher-kings will undertake knowledge-based virtuous action only as a 'second-best' activity by comparison with the possession of objective ethical knowledge.²⁵⁵ But, in holding this view, and in allowing it to inform their government of the community, they are, in a real sense, fulfilling their inclination to care for the community as a whole.²⁵⁶ If they failed to shape the community in the light of their knowledge of this truth, they would be failing in their inclination to care for the community in the special way in which only they can, as a result of the combination of their nature and education.

I think that this line of thought is compatible with the larger framework of thinking in the *Republic*; as indicated, it is parallel to the role allocated to reason at a crucial point in the argument about pleasure in Book 9.²⁵⁷ However, I see no explicit evidence that Plato is disposed to pursue this line of thought. Also, even if he did, it would not close the motivational gap between the desire for post-dialectical knowledge and the desire to rule but would rather

²⁵³ The philosopher-rulers see dialectically based knowledge of objective truth (centred on the Form of the Good) as the highest available human happiness, as suggested by R. 519–21, taken with 485–6 and 583–7 (see text to nn. 206–13 above and refs. in n. 240 (1) and 249 above).

²⁵⁴ See R. 500b–501c, taken with text to n. 223 and refs. in n. 223 above.

²⁵⁵ See R. 519–21 (together with text to nn. 240, 245, 249 above), developing a point implied in 499b5–6, 500d4–5.

²⁵⁶ This is only an implication of the argument of R.; but it is conceivable that the 'encoding' of the virtues in the life-forms of the community (401a–402c, 500b–501c) can convey this message, as a preliminary statement of a truth that some auxiliaries at least will eventually learn for themselves.

²⁵⁷ In the account offered in text to nn. 206–13 above, reason shapes the desires of all the psychic parts in the light of the overriding pleasurable of post-dialectical knowledge, and the philosopher-rulers shape the government of the *polis* in the light of a similar kind of knowledge, and one that entails their reluctance to rule.

translate it into institutional form: ruling reluctantly would be part of the philosopher-rulers' job, but they would still rule reluctantly.²⁵⁸ Since I see no other obvious way of closing this motivational gap, I conclude that Plato highlights this gap, despite the apparent risk to his picture of the relationship between pre- and post-dialectical virtue, in order to underline the status of post-dialectical knowledge as the highest human activity. Any account of the significance of this picture for the conception of personality that is implied here needs, therefore, to take account of the resulting tension.

4.7 PHILOSOPHER-RULERS AND PROBLEMATIC HEROES

I close this chapter by considering the implications of the tension just described, and of the *Republic's* thinking about pre-reflective and post-reflective virtue, for my larger enquiry into conceptions of personality in Greek thought. I do so, in the first instance, by taking up a question raised earlier: that of the relationship between the conflict highlighted in R. 519–21 (which has analogues in other Greek theories) and that discussed in connection with the problematic heroes of Greek poetry in Chapter 3.²⁵⁹ Although there are some specific differences in the nature of the conflicts involved, there are also significant points of similarity, which are suggestive for the larger question of the relationship between Greek poetic and philosophical psycho-ethical thinking.

In the poetic cases discussed in Chapter 3, the key area of tension or conflict is not, precisely, that between conventional ethical norms and norms which are established as the result of reflection (between pre- and post-dialectical virtue, in the terms used in the preceding section). In my interpretation, at least, the problematic heroes see themselves as adopting stances which are consistent with, and derived from, conventionally recognized ethical claims: those of the ethics of chieftainly reciprocity, in the case of Achilles and Ajax, and those of the mutual and lasting ties created by familial *philia*, in

²⁵⁸ To put the point differently, this line of thought would confirm the point made in text to nn. 220–2 above, that Plato conceives the philosopher-rulers as capable of fulfilling all the functions allocated to them (as conceived in the model outlined in n. 220 above), but not as motivated positively to fulfil *one* of these functions (i.e. that of informing pre-dialectical virtue with post-dialectical knowledge).

²⁵⁹ See 3.6 above, esp. text to nn. 234–9.

Medea's.²⁶⁰ The conflict centres, rather, on the exemplary gesture by which they choose to dramatize (what they see as) gross failures to observe these conventional norms of interpersonal relationships on the part of Agamemnon, the Atreidae and Odysseus, and Jason. It derives from the tension (which the heroes themselves acknowledge) between the maintenance of the exemplary gestures and the normal ethical claims of interpersonal relationships.²⁶¹

In Greek philosophy, we find a pervasive belief that properly conducted reflective debate (usually conceived as dialectic)²⁶² can play a substantive role in validating ethical norms. In some theories the norms thus validated are, broadly, the pre-reflective norms promoted by interactive exchange in a well-run community.²⁶³ Other theories, by contrast, stress the thought that post-reflective virtues are significantly different from (even sound) pre-reflective virtues, and are, in some sense, 'real' or 'true' virtues.²⁶⁴ The *Republic*, as interpreted here, advances a relatively complex position in which (under ideal conditions) reflection both depends on, and validates, pre-reflective virtue, while at the same time establishing, and generating, a type of virtue that is distinct even from ideal pre-reflective virtue.²⁶⁵ In these ideal circumstances (though not under other circumstances),²⁶⁶ there is no direct conflict between properly grounded post-reflective and pre-reflective virtue, though there is a distinction. The conflict or tension which arises in connection with the philosopher-rulers' return to the cave is not this conflict. Nor is it, precisely, the kind of conflict that arises in the case of the problematic heroes (between the post-reflective exemplary gesture and pre-reflective ethical claims); indeed, in the ideal state, that particular kind of conflict could not arise. Rather, the conflict is between two aspects of post-reflective virtue: namely, between the recognition (1) that post-reflective knowledge represents the highest human activity and (2) that it carries with it the obligation to inform

²⁶⁰ See above 2.6, text to nn. 134–5; 2.9, text to nn. 228–38; 3.4, text to nn. 109–15.

²⁶¹ See above 3.3, text to nn. 81–5; 3.4, text to nn. 124–43; 3.5, text to nn. 180–90.

²⁶² On dialectic in Plato, see 4.5 above, text to nn. 147–53; in Aristotle, see Irwin (1988), chs. 2–3 (taken with Ch. 5 below, n. 30); in the Stoics, see LS 31.

²⁶³ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 180–3.

²⁶⁴ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 186–8.

²⁶⁵ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 219–25.

²⁶⁶ Under other circumstances, there will be, necessarily, conflict between well-grounded dialectic (if this is possible in non-ideal communities, on which see 4.4 above, text to nn. 116–19) and the normative discourse of a non-ideal community; see R. 491e–492c, 497b–d, 592a–b.

pre-reflective virtue with post-reflective knowledge. As I put it earlier, the conflict lies between the pattern of motivation generated by properly grounded post-reflective knowledge (which leads one to give the highest value to such knowledge) and one of the roles that the possession of such knowledge, in an ideal society, requires one to fulfil.²⁶⁷

However, although the two types of conflict that arise in each area are, in this way, dissimilar, they express a broadly similar pattern of psycho-ethical thinking. The pattern of thinking is of the type that I am calling 'objective-participant', and the key relevant themes are those summarized at the start of this chapter.²⁶⁸ As stressed already, both Plato's *Republic* and the poetic genres presuppose a psychological model that is 'objective' in the sense of not being centred on the idea of the self-conscious 'I' or subject, but on that of interplay between the functions or parts of the psyche, especially between beliefs and reasoning, on the one hand, and emotions and desires, on the other.²⁶⁹ Also, both areas presuppose that human psycho-ethical life, as conceived in this psychological model, is shaped (and is properly shaped) by the combination of (a) the action-guiding discourse of interpersonal and communal engagement and (b) reflective debate about the proper goals of a human life. The specific forms of conflict described earlier, in connection with the problematic heroes and the philosopher-rulers (text to nn. 260–7 above), arise in different ways from this same framework, though neither conflict consists of a straightforward conflict between (a) and (b).

Both the poetic and the philosophical versions of this type of conflict seem to me to be animated by a shared character and structure, which can, first of all, be described negatively. In discussing Achilles' rejection of Agamemnon's gifts, I argued against the 'subjectivist-individualist' interpretation of Whitman and Parry, in which the rejection is the expression of a search for a purely personal ethic, distinct from the ethical norms of the community.²⁷⁰ Arguments of a similar (though not quite identical) kind could be mounted against any attempt to interpret the philosopher-rulers' reluctance to re-enter the cave, in spite of the communally based

²⁶⁷ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 220–2 (taken with text to nn. 206–13).

²⁶⁸ See 4.1 above (p. 241), the second theme restated in 4.6 above, text to n. 177.

²⁶⁹ See 3.1 above, text to nn. 1–22; 4.2 above, esp. text to nn. 48–52.

²⁷⁰ See 2.5 above, text to nn. 95–110, taken with 2.6–8.

reasons for doing so, in similarly subjectivist-individualist terms.²⁷¹ In the case of the latter conflict, as of the *Republic's* psycho-ethical theory in general, I have also argued against Irwin's tendency to interpret Plato in the light of a (very differently conceived) 'individualist' model, of a broadly Kantian, and objectivist, type. The kind of 'individualism' that I have in view is that which sees the properly moral response as depending on a specially individual stance, regarded by Kant as a certain kind of rational autonomy, and by Irwin as a certain kind of rational deliberation. As Irwin, like Kant, sees the matter, this stance necessarily issues in other-benefiting motivation; hence, the philosopher-rulers' reluctance to re-enter the cave (to benefit others) is not explicable, as it stands, in this interpretation.²⁷²

Neither the poetic nor the Platonic versions of this conflict seem to be best interpreted in individualist terms (in either of the forms described), whether what is at issue is the mode of reflection or its goal. As regards the mode, the poetic heroes function as isolated individuals by force of circumstances (because of the response that they feel that they must make to their situation), not because that is the appropriate mode of ethical reflection. Their reflectively based stance, though in conflict with conventional ethical claims, is conceived as derived from, and dramatizing what is essential in, conventional ethical norms.²⁷³ Plato's philosopher-rulers reach their valuation of reflectively based knowledge by functioning as a group whose proper role is that of establishing the fundamental truths underlying both pre- and post-reflective virtue (under ideal conditions).²⁷⁴ The latter point bears on the goal, as well as the mode, of reflection. Although, for reasons already indicated, there are difficulties in specifying the precise content of the philosopher-rulers' knowledge, it seems better described as providing the ethical basis for a proper human life than as relating in some special way to the 'self' of the person as individual.²⁷⁵ In the poetic cases, there are reasons of a rather different kind that make it difficult to specify the

²⁷¹ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 227–9. The arguments would need to be different so as to reflect the different forms of the conflict, defined in text to nn. 260–7 above.

²⁷² See 4.5 above, text to nn. 122–37, 4.6 above, text to nn. 230–1. On the intellectual background to these different forms of 'individualist' approach, see 1.1 above, text to nn. 17–30; 2.5 above, text to nn. 99–109; 5.3 below, text to nn. 67–74.

²⁷³ See refs. in n. 261 above.

²⁷⁴ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 189–205, 219–25.

²⁷⁵ See 4.5 above, text to n. 151 (and n. 151), taken with text to nn. 150–3.

analytic content of the reflection underlying the hero's stance. But, in these cases too, reflection seems plausibly described as centring on the question of the proper form of a human life, and, in particular, on the kind of interpersonal relationships that should form part of such a life.²⁷⁶ In the case of the *Republic*, as emphasized earlier, reflection is conceived in objectivist terms, and is envisaged as achieving, under ideal communal and intellectual conditions, knowledge of objective truth.²⁷⁷ Although it is, clearly, difficult to transfer such categories to the discussion of Achilles' and Medea's reflectively based stances, the implied grounds of their stances seem better understood in objectivist than subjectivist terms. Indeed, if this were not so, their stances would be 'problematic' in a different, and more extreme, sense than I have taken them to be.²⁷⁸

This point is related to the second major parallel between the cases of the problematic heroes and the philosopher-rulers. I have described the hero's problematic act as an 'exemplary gesture'; and this is meant to suggest that the hero is seeking, in this hugely controversial way, to convey the fact that her stance is seen as grounded in values shared with other members of her ethical community. This point is not negated by the fact that those others (who are reactively engaged in the outcome of the hero's stance) are unable or unlikely to recognize its exemplary character.²⁷⁹ In another sense, the gesture functions as a contribution to the larger 'dialectic' made up by the poetic work as a whole, which can be viewed as forming part of the reflective debate of its society.²⁸⁰ Can we also describe the philosopher-ruler's reluctance to enter the cave (though coupled with their responsiveness to arguments that they should do so) as an exemplary gesture of this sort? To whom could this gesture be exemplary, and for whom does the message of this gesture apply?

At the end of the previous section, I considered the idea that the philosopher-rulers' reluctance to rule could form part of the

²⁷⁶ This form of reflection is most explicit in *Il.* 9. 406–16, a key prototype for the 'choice of lives' theme in Greek thought, and 12. 322–8, but is implied elsewhere. See above 2.6, text to nn. 131–5; 2.7, text to nn. 183–5; 2.8, text to nn. 187–94; 2.9, text to nn. 228–9, 249–60; 3.4, text to n. 115.

²⁷⁷ See 4.5 above, text to nn. 138–61, 171–3.

²⁷⁸ On my general approach to the 'problematic' heroes see above 2.4; and, for a contrasting, subjective-individualist approach, see 2.3, text to nn. 40–8; 2.5, text to nn. 99–110.

²⁷⁹ See above 2.8, text to nn. 190–203; 2.9, text to nn. 223–34, 261–2, 272–81; 3.4, text to nn. 121–43.

²⁸⁰ See 2.4 above, text to n. 86.

structure of virtues (an aspect of wisdom, for instance) that they 'encode' in the pre-reflective world-view of the ideal state. This idea seems to me to be compatible with the *Republic's* larger framework of thinking and with the implied belief that the ultimate preferability of reflectively based knowledge applies, in essence, to all human beings as such. However, I see no clear indication that Plato sees the philosopher-rulers' reluctance as a gesture directed specifically at the ideal community, even at the auxiliaries, for some of whom this truth will eventually be recognized for themselves.²⁸¹ However, it is clear that the presentation of the philosopher-rulers' reluctance, the problematic character of which is well marked in the *Republic*, is conceived as a gesture to someone, as is Aristotle's analogous stress on the competing claims of ethical and contemplative wisdom, and certain other partly parallel features in Greek ethical philosophy (5.6–7 below).

I see two possible ways of characterizing the intended audience of this gesture, both of which have a larger relevance for my enquiry. So far, in discussing the *Republic*, I have followed (and will mostly follow) the usual practice of treating Socrates as the mouthpiece for Plato and the dialogue between Socrates and his interlocutors as a continuous argument by Plato. However, it is a fact of some significance both for the interpretation of Plato's writings,²⁸² and for my project here, that this is not how the *Republic* is presented. As I have noted already, the dialogue of the *Republic* should not be taken as the equivalent for the philosopher-rulers' knowledge-yielding dialectic but rather as a 'shared search' by Socrates and his interlocutors for the best way to characterize such dialectic and the ethical objectivity that it yields.²⁸³ A related idea, pursued later, is that the extent to which Socrates' interlocutors can be expected to understand fully, and to respond to, his picture of what it means to be fully 'human' (or 'divine') varies according to the ethical and intellectual preparation that they bring to the dialogue.²⁸⁴ Here, the relevant point is that the philosopher-rulers' reluctance to rule is presented as an exemplary gesture to Socrates' interlocutors, and as a contribution to their shared search for the best form of human happiness, a gesture

²⁸¹ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 251–8.

²⁸² See further refs. in Ch. 6 n. 181.

²⁸³ See 4.5 above, text to n. 151 (and n. 151); see further Gill (1992).

²⁸⁴ See 6.6 below, text to nn. 175–94, discussing *R.* 588b–592b.

which some at least of them should be in a position to understand.²⁸⁵ In another sense, the gesture is directed at 'us', Plato's readers, a gesture which will be fully intelligible as far, and only as far, as we too bring to the dialogue the requisite combination of ethical preparation and intellectual engagement.

In other Greek philosophical theories, the claim that post-dialectical knowledge of objective truth constitutes the highest human happiness is coupled with the attempt to communicate this idea to those others who are, in principle, capable of understanding it. As I suggest later, this fact is relevant for understanding the ethical implications of this claim. Although achieving knowledge is presented as, ultimately, preferable as a mode of human happiness to practical other-benefiting action, communicating this claim is also conceived as the most profound way to benefit others.²⁸⁶ I think that this point is relevant to understanding the ethical implications of the similar claim made, in effect, through the presentation of the philosopher-rulers' reluctance to re-enter the cave. The presentation of this reluctance can also be treated as an 'exemplary gesture' of a sort, and one that is also intended to benefit others by communicating this claim. This gesture is not made for the benefit of those living in the cave, by the standards of pre-dialectical virtue, nor is it fully intelligible to them.²⁸⁷ It is made for the benefit of Glaucon, Adeimantus, and those of Plato's readers who are similarly equipped to form some understanding, at least, of what this gesture implies. As in the case of Aristotle *NE* 10. 7–8, the significance of this gesture is not uncomplicated, since it is combined with the recognition that practical action, of a more immediately other-benefiting kind, also has substantive claims on us. Plato's *Republic*, taken as a whole, as well as the presentation of the philosopher-rulers' attitude to re-entering the cave, underlines the need to acknowledge this fact in the way that we shape our lives, and so does *NE* 10. 7–8.²⁸⁸ But both works stress, above all, that we should shape our lives in the light of

²⁸⁵ On the differentiated character of Socrates' interlocutors in *R.*, see ref. in n. 284 above.

²⁸⁶ See 5.6 below, text to nn. 252–69, 286–91; 5.7, text to nn. 321–7, 345–9.

²⁸⁷ This suggestion is considered, but set aside, in 4.6 above, text to nn. 251–8.

²⁸⁸ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 228–9, 232–42; 5.6 below, text to nn. 255–61. Despite the emphasis on the objective preferability of philosophical knowledge in *R.* 584–7 (cf. 485–6), the conclusion of the main part of the argument of *R.* (588b–592b, esp. 591b–592b) is relatively neutral as regards the kind of life that constitutes 'justice'. On the synthesizing model in *R.*, validating both pre- and post-dialectic virtue, see 4.6 above, text to nn. 219–25.

(what is presented as) the objective fact that such knowledge represents the highest form of human happiness;²⁸⁹ and I take this to be the central significance of Plato's presentation of the philosopher-rulers' reluctance in *R.* 519–21.

If we return to the question of the relationship between this exemplary gesture, as thus interpreted, and that of the problematic heroes of Greek poetry, two significant differences now emerge. One is that, whereas the reflection underlying the heroes' exemplary gesture represents a theorization of principles that already form part of pre-reflective discourse, the philosophers believe that (properly grounded) reflection can provide access to truths which are independent of such discourse. In this instance, well-grounded reflection is taken to yield a (true) conception of human happiness which is different from that embodied even in well-grounded pre-reflective discourse.²⁹⁰ A second, and related, consequence is this. The tension which is identified in the philosophical cases is less easy to resolve than that in the poetic cases. Since *both* the problematic hero's exemplary gesture *and* the more conventional ethical claims derive, ultimately, from the same ethical framework, they are, essentially, compatible, and could be rendered fully compatible by altered circumstances.²⁹¹ In the philosophical cases, however, the tension arises from distinct frameworks, pre- and post-reflective; and, although the *Republic* offers ways of negotiating between these, *R.* 519–21 (like *Arist. NE* 10. 7–8) highlights this distinction. In the nature of things, the philosopher-rulers cannot give the highest possible priority *both* to achieving dialectically based knowledge *and* to using this to inform pre-dialectic virtue (though they can, of course, give *some* priority to both), and the motivational tension thus highlighted reflects this fact. In this respect, the conflict indicated in *R.* 519–21, and also in *NE* 10. 7–8, is *more* problematic than that which is expressed in the poetic cases, since it cannot, ultimately, be resolved.²⁹²

²⁸⁹ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 204–13, 246–9, 257–8; and 5.6 below, text to nn. 278–91.

²⁹⁰ On this contrast, see also text to nn. 259–67 above, taken with refs. in n. 289 above.

²⁹¹ This would be so if e.g. Agamemnon were prepared and able to 'pay back all his spirit-grieving insult', *Il.* 9. 387, and Jason to acknowledge in action and attitude the ties of *philia* that bind him to Medea. See above 2.7, text to nn. 175–81; 2.9, text to nn. 222–9, taken with text to nn. 260–1 above.

²⁹² It cannot be resolved if defined in this form; for another way of defining and (partly) resolving this tension, see text to n. 286 above.

However, despite this, rather striking, difference between the two areas, the two types of conflict, and of exemplary gesture, have the general similarity described earlier, which renders them more appropriately described in objectivist-participant terms than in individualist ones (whether of a subjectivist or objectivist type).²⁹³ The question with which I conclude derives from this similarity. How far does Plato, in the *Republic*, show any awareness of the kind of similarity that I am suggesting? I have in view both the (partial) similarity between the philosopher-rulers' psycho-ethical conflict in *R.* 519–21 and those discussed in connection with the problematic heroes of Greek epic and tragedy in Chapter 3, and the more general similarity between Greek philosophical and poetic views of the roles of ethical reflection. In raising this question, I am aware that, if my general account of Greek thinking about the person holds good, there is no special reason why Plato should be aware of any such similarity (since both kinds of case reflect a pervasively objective-participant way of thinking about the person). None the less, given the notable (though not complete) nature of the parallel involved, there is a special interest in seeing whether such similarities also strike Greek thinkers themselves. This point has particular relevance in the case of the *Republic*, since Plato gives some prominence in this work to the significance of the stances and psycho-ethical states of problematic heroes.

On the face of it, the answer to this question, in both its aspects, is clearly negative. As noted in Chapter 2, the *Republic* gives special emphasis to the violent acts and emotional states of epic and tragic figures, particularly the grief of Homer's Achilles. However, Plato's main point, in doing so, is to contrast such actions and attitudes with those which are, and which can help to promote, 'reason-ruled' psycho-ethical harmony.²⁹⁴ He does not focus on the actions which I am calling 'exemplary gestures' (though he comments obliquely on Achilles' rejection of the gifts of Agamemnon);²⁹⁵ nor is there any equivalent in his account for the idea of an exemplary gesture. He also does not focus on the kinds of psycho-ethical conflict discussed in Chapter 3 or interpret these conflicts in the way I have

²⁹³ See text to nn. 268–80 above.

²⁹⁴ See 2.2 above, text to nn. 12–13, 25–7, 32–48. See further Gill (1993b), 42–51; Ferrari (1989), 110–19, 131–9.

²⁹⁵ See *R.* 390e, 391c; and text to n. 312 below.

done.²⁹⁶ He does present intense emotional states such as Achilles' grief in *Iliad* 18 as constituting a form of psycho-ethical conflict. But this is only in the rather special sense that they fail to correspond to the kind of psycho-ethical unity or 'harmony' that is taken to be characteristic, in different ways, of both pre- and post-dialectical virtue.²⁹⁷ It is true, of course, that Plato also suggests that 'even the best of us' are inclined to become sympathetically engaged in the poetic portrayal of intense emotional reactions such as the grief of Achilles (even though we disapprove, in principle, of such reactions). I have taken this suggestion as an indication that he too recognizes the psycho-ethical complexity in certain Greek poetic figures that makes it appropriate to call them 'problematic'.²⁹⁸ But his explanation for this, as far as it goes,²⁹⁹ is very different from the kind of explanation offered in Chapters 2 and 3, which is centred on the idea of the audience's engagement with the heroes' reflectively based exemplary gesture (maintained in spite of the recognition of conventional ethical claims).³⁰⁰

However, I think that there are reasons for seeing the position as more complex than these considerations suggest, and for supposing that Plato (like other Greek philosophers) has some sense of the idea that intense heroic stances rest on a special kind of ethical depth or thoughtfulness. In the *Apology*, for instance, Plato shows Socrates as presenting his own insistence on practising philosophy (in spite of the danger to his life in doing so) as comparable to the stance of, for instance, Achilles in *Iliad* 18, who regards the possibility of his imminent death as unimportant compared with the dishonour of failing to avenge Patroclus' death.³⁰¹ It is of special interest that Socrates' own stance in the *Apology* (a reflectively based stance in conflict with conventional ethico-political claims) shows a strong

²⁹⁶ On Plato's way of analysing the psycho-ethical conflict of *R.* 439e–440e, see 3.6 above, text to nn. 225–8; and, on the absence of the interpretative model deployed in *Ch.* 3, see 3.6 above, text to nn. 231–3.

²⁹⁷ *R.* 603c–605e, esp. 603c–d, 604b, 604e–605b; 603d5–7 refers back to 436b–441c. On links with Achilles' grief see refs. in n. 311 below. On the contrasting norm of psycho-ethical unity or harmony, see above 4.2, esp. text to nn. 8, 66–8; 4.6, text to nn. 201–13.

²⁹⁸ *R.* 605c10–d5, e4–6, taken with 2.2 above, text to nn. 11–14.

²⁹⁹ See 2.2 above, text to nn. 13–14, and n. 20.

³⁰⁰ See text to nn. 260–1 above.

³⁰¹ *Pl. Ap.* 28b–30b, esp. 28c–d; Achilles regards danger to life and death as less important than avoiding acting 'in a dishonourable way' (*aischron*, c3, *kakos*, d1) by failing to avenge Patroclus' death; the passage refers to *Il.* 18. 95–104, citing 98 and 104. See also *Pl. Smp.* 179e.

general resemblance to the exemplary gestures of the poetic heroes, as analysed here.³⁰² It does not follow, of course, that Plato is implying that Achilles' stance in *Iliad* 18 is to be understood as an (ethically problematic) reflectively based stance of the same type. The point of comparison is more localized, and, in any case, this kind of interpretation does not wholly fit Achilles' attitude in this passage.³⁰³ However, the fact that Plato cites Achilles' grief-stricken affirmation in connection with Socrates' stance indicates the recognition of much closer links between the poetic and philosophical presentation of ethically acceptable attitudes than we would expect from reading the *Republic*. Also, the presentation of Socrates' reflectively based stance in (broadly) 'heroic' colours leaves open, at least, the possibility that Plato might recognize the type of analysis offered here of the exemplary gesture of poetic heroes.³⁰⁴

The idea that heroic attitudes represent prototypes for especially deep (and, in some sense, thoughtful) expression of the virtues can also be attributed, by implication at least, to Aristotle and the Stoics, in ways that represent a continuation of Plato's comment here. This is true, for instance, of Aristotle's presentation of the good person as willing to give up his life for his friend (and for the sake of acting 'for the sake of the fine'). This passage, together with his account of the willingness of the magnanimous person (*megalosuchos*) to take great risks in order to perform major, honour-yielding virtuous acts, is often, and plausibly, taken to express a heroic, and perhaps specifically Achillean, ethos.³⁰⁵ The heroic background may help to explain the combination in such passages (which Aristotle himself

³⁰² See esp. *Ap.* 29c–30b: Socrates regards his continuation of (what he sees as) a divine mission (21a–23b) as more important than obeying the court, if it discharged him on the proviso that he stopped philosophizing. A similar stance (though leading to a different attitude to legal authority) is taken by Socrates in *Crito* 44e–53d, where Socrates' reflectively based commitment to the laws of the state (commanding him to stay and be punished) is presented as overriding Crito's urging of the conventional ethical claims of Socrates' *philo*i (friends and relatives); see, esp. 45c–46a, 46b–d, 48c–d, 50b–c. The *Crito* debate is partly parallel to the Ajax–Tecmessa debate in *S. Ai.*; see 3.4 above, text to nn. 116–43; also refs. in n. 261 above.

³⁰³ Achilles' expression of grief and commitment to avenge Patroclus is not itself an exemplary gesture of the same type as his rejection of Agamemnon's gifts in *Il.* 9. But the recognition of his own (partial) contribution to Hector's death (*Il.* 18. 98–104) and the knowledge that this vengeance will cost him his own life (18. 95–6, contrast 9. 410–20), make this an unusually considered and life-shaping decision.

³⁰⁴ See nn. 301–2 and 316 below.

³⁰⁵ See *NE* 9. 8, 1169^a18–36, esp. 18–20, 22–6; 4. 3, esp. 1124^b6–12, 1124^b17–1125^a1. See also 5.5 below, text to nn. 135–6.

notes as puzzling in one context) of indifference to (good and bad) fortune and unwillingness to accept dishonour, a combination which is exemplified, strikingly, by (among others) Achilles, Ajax, and Socrates.³⁰⁶ In Stoic thinking, magnanimity sometimes takes the place normally assigned to courage in the typology of the virtues. It is sometimes defined by reference to indifference to fortune and willingness to undergo risks to perform great and other-benefiting acts, a form of definition that displays some continuity with the ethical attitudes discussed in Aristotle and Plato's *Apology*.³⁰⁷ Although this conception of magnanimity is not explicitly connected by the Stoics with heroic figures, they are willing in some cases to see heroes as exemplars of virtue; and virtue is taken by them to involve treating conventional 'good things', such as continued life, as 'matters of indifference'.³⁰⁸ None of these points constitute the more precise claims about the parallels between heroic and philosophical reflection (and the conflicts to which they can give rise) suggested earlier.³⁰⁹ On the other hand, when coupled with Plato's comment in the *Apology* and elsewhere,³¹⁰ they indicate that the kind of connections made earlier might have been conceptually available to Plato at the time of writing the *Republic*.

This opens up an alternative reading of Plato's treatment of heroic stances in the *Republic*. Perhaps it is not so much that he shows no awareness of the connections between heroic and philosophical stances made in other areas of Greek thought (including his own), but that he deliberately excludes these. There are certain features of the *Republic* that might point in this direction. One is the prominence given to Achilles' expression of grief at the death of Patroclus,

³⁰⁶ *Posterior Analytics* (*APo.*) 97^b15–26. I am suggesting that these two features are present both in the Aristotelian passages and the heroic passages, such as *Il.* 18. 98–104, which may underlie these, provided that we allow 'not allowing dishonour' (*APo.* 97^b24) to have the ethically rich sense of avoiding dishonour by not acting dishonourably (non-virtuously). On the relationship between Homeric and Aristotelian ethical thinking, see 1.3 above, text to nn. 137–54. For a different estimate of the coherence of Aristotle's thinking on magnanimity, see Annas (1993), 116–18; and, for an alternative, (broadly) Aristotelian analysis of a similar character type, exemplified again by Socrates, Ajax, and Lysander, and made in terms of 'melancholy' (excess of black bile), see [Arist.] *Prob.* 30. 1, esp. 952^a19–31.

³⁰⁷ See e.g. *Cic. Off.* 1. 66–7; also Annas (1993), 119, referring to Arius Didymus 61. 15–17, *DL* 7. 128; and Dyck (1981).

³⁰⁸ See e.g. on Heracles/Hercules as a pre-Stoic exemplar of other-benefiting virtue, *Cic. Fin.* 3. 66, and refs. in Wright (1991), 178 n. 286; also 1.3 above, text to nn. 155–9.

³⁰⁹ See text to nn. 268–80 above.

³¹⁰ See refs. in n. 301 above.

treated in the *Apology* as a context in which Achilles displayed special courage, but singled out as a key example of an 'unreasonable' psycho-ethical response in *Republic* 3 and, by implication, 10. The idea noted earlier that pre-reflective (like post-reflective) courage rests on the belief that death (for oneself or a *philos*) is not 'something terrible' is, explicitly, contrasted with the grief-stricken reactions of Achilles in *Iliad* 18.³¹¹ A possible implication of this network of connections is that Plato is, in the *Republic*, specifically counteracting the more familiar characterization of Achilles as, in *Iliad* 18, both justifiably grieved and brave in his response, a characterization which seems to be presupposed in the *Apology*. We can combine this point with what can only be described as a highly satirical treatment of other key incidents in the unfolding story of Achilles' problematic heroism, including the rejection (and final acceptance) of Agamemnon's gifts and the acceptance of Priam's ransom for the body of Hector, both treated as expressing 'lack of generosity combined with acquisitiveness [*ἀνελευθερίαν μετὰ φιλοχρηματίας*]'.³¹² Comments of this kind display something rather more than is required by the *Republic*'s programme of converting the traditional educational pattern into a vehicle for promoting pre-dialectical virtue. There seems to be a deliberate attempt to *subvert* a received cultural reading of the ethico-emotional stances of the problematic heroes of the poetic tradition,³¹³ and this attempt pre-empts any move towards highlighting possible connections between poetic and philosophical ideals.

It is worth noticing, none the less, that the *Republic* contains some of the materials with which one *might*, in a different project from Plato's, construct a picture of heroic psycho-ethical stances which underlines the similarity with the philosophical ideal, as interpreted here. For instance, it is possible to interpret the discussion of poetry in Books 2–3, as well as the succeeding account of the pre-reflective virtues, as presuming a psychological model in which emotional

³¹¹ See *R.* 388a–c, 391b; 605c11–d5 alludes to this type of epic-tragic grieving, perhaps with Achilles specifically in mind. 603e–605a, esp. 603e4–5, refers explicitly to 387d–e (coupled with criticism of Achilles' grief). On the relationship between 387d–e and 486a–b, see 4.6 above, text to nn. 198, 202, 205.

³¹² *R.* 390e, 391c, esp. c5; the implication, bizarrely, is that Achilles' behaviour in *Il.* 19 and 24 is motivated principally by the desire to maximize material gain. For a similarly satirical treatment of Achilles' successive modification of his stand in *Il.* 9 (on which see 2.7 above, text to nn. 158–62), see *Pl. Hp. Mi.* 370–1.

³¹³ For parallel Stoic attempts, see *Epict. Diss.* 1.28, taken with 3.6 above, esp. text to nn. 240–1; also n. 316 below.

responses such as Achilles' depend on beliefs, including general, life-shaping beliefs, about the nature of life after death. The general beliefs cited in the *Republic* include Achilles' famous reflective declaration, in *Iliad* 24, about the arbitrariness of the way in which Zeus distributes good and bad to human beings.³¹⁴ Such comments are, explicitly, presented as the kind of ideas which promote 'falsehood in the psyche' about 'the most important things' in the educated auxiliaries.³¹⁵ In a rather different reading, they could be treated as examples of the reflective (second-order) reasoning to which problematic heroes are stimulated by their situation, and which underlies the exemplary gestures such as those satirically referred to by Plato in this context. My point is not that Plato, in effect or by implication, *does* adopt such a reading of the poetic material, but rather that his psychological and ethical framework is one which *could* allow him to adopt such a reading. That he does not do so reflects a complex of features of the *Republic*, and of Plato's thinking elsewhere, which express the desire not so much to analyse the problematic heroes of the poetic tradition dispassionately (in a way that might highlight links with philosophical ideals) but rather to *replace* these with new ideals, such as the philosopher-rulers, and Socrates himself, as portrayed in the dialogues.³¹⁶ Thus, the thought that these philosophical ideals might also be ethically problematic (indeed, in some ways more problematic than their poetic equivalents), while compatible with the psycho-ethical thinking expressed in the *Republic*, is not pursued in that work and is, indeed, excluded by its project.

³¹⁴ R. 379d, referring to *Il.* 24. 527–32, taken to illustrate falsehoods about the gods (and promoting the view of divine management of human affairs criticized in 392a–b).

³¹⁵ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 198–200.

³¹⁶ On Socrates as a new type of 'hero', see, e.g., *Pl. Ap.* 28b–30b; *Phd.* 115a5–6, taken with 115a–118a; *Smp.* 219e–221c, esp. 202c2 and 221c6–8. See further e.g. Halliwell (1984), 55–8. Note also *Pl. Lg.* 811c–e, where the Athenian Stranger, in effect, envisages the Platonic dialogues as *replacing* the poetic tradition in Greek education. Plato's success in this respect is indicated by the role of Socrates, among other exemplars, as a 'hero', because of the kind of 'Stoic' fortitude displayed in the passages cited above. See e.g. Seneca, *De tranquillitate animi* 5. 2–4 (taken with Gill (1994), 4619–20; Long (1988), 150–1).

5

Being Yourself and Meeting the Claims of Others

Someone is said to be weak-willed or self-controlled depending on whether the mind [or 'reason', *nous*] is in control or not, implying that this [the mind] is what each of us is. What people do in a reasoned way [*meta logou*] are thought to be especially their own, voluntary acts. It is clear that this is what each of us is, for the most part at least . . .

Arist. *NE* 9. 8, 1168^b34–1169^a2

If the mind [*nous*, capable of contemplation, *theoria*] is divine by comparison with the human being [as a whole], the life of the mind [*κατὰ τοῦτον*] must be divine by comparison with the [purely] human life . . . This [contemplative mind] would seem to be what each of us is, if it is the authoritative and better part of us. It would be odd if we chose someone else's life instead of our own.

Arist. *NE* 10. 7, 1177^b30–1, 1178^a2–4.

5.1 PRELIMINARIES

In this chapter, I take up, in connection with a number of Greek philosophical theories, especially Aristotle's, a general question which raises similar issues to that raised by Plato's presentation of the philosopher-rulers' attitude to re-entering the cave. The question is how to describe, and to resolve, the conflict between pursuing your own happiness and meeting the ethical claims of other people. As well as recalling the issue of how to understand the attitude of the philosopher-rulers (4.6), this question also recalls those raised in connection with the problematic heroes of Greek epic and tragedy (chs. 2–3). It thus provides a context in which to pursue the questions about Greek ethical and psycho-ethical thinking already considered, and to extend my claim that such thinking is best

understood in the light of an 'objective-participant' framework of thinking about the person. Since Aristotle, at least, sometimes frames his response to this issue by urging us to realize our true self (more precisely, 'what each of us is'),¹ this issue brings to the fore the questions about the relationship between Greek thought and modern thinking about 'self' and 'person' that are central to my enquiry in this book.²

I consider the conflict between pursuing your own happiness and meeting the claims of others, first of all, in connection with Aristotle's theory of friendship (*philia*). The conflict does not arise so much from Aristotle's account of ideal friendship (NE 8. 3–5, EE 7. 2), though this account does raise the question of the appropriate type of ethical framework for understanding Aristotle's ideal. It derives rather from the fact that, in reflecting further on his ideal, Aristotle analyses even the closest type of friendship as an extension of self-love and as a means of developing your own happiness.³ A related problem is raised by the claim (NE 10. 7–8) that the highest form of happiness is constituted by the 'divine' life of philosophical contemplation rather than the 'human' one of practical action expressing the ethical virtues (though the latter is the more obviously other-benefiting kind of life). The two Aristotelian discussions are connected by the fact that, in both cases, Aristotle makes significant use of the idea that we should realize 'what each of us is' (or 'what each of us seems to be'), though apparently attaching rather different senses to this notion in the two contexts.⁴

There are analogies between the problems raised by these Aristotelian passages, particularly when taken together, and those raised by certain Platonic and Epicurean theories. In the final mysteries of Diotima (*Symposium* 210a–212b), it seems, on the face of it, that the quest for the quasi-divine state of achieving knowledge of the Form of the Beautiful supersedes erotic (and other-benefiting) relationships with other people. In Epicurean philosophy, there is a problem, as later Epicureans themselves recognized, in understanding how a life shaped by the pursuit of one's own pleasure, as the Epicureans conceive this, can accommodate full-hearted commit-

¹ See refs. in n. 4 below.

² On these questions see *Introd.*, esp. text to nn. 34–7; Ch. 6, esp. 6.1–2, 6.7.

³ NE 9. 4, 8, 9; EE 7. 6, 12.

⁴ NE 9. 4, 1166^a13–23 and 9. 8, 1168^b28–1169^a3; 10. 7, 1177^b26–1178^a8. Sections of the two latter passages are cited at the head of this chapter.

ment to one's friends. The Stoics present the achievement of the highest form of human happiness ('wisdom') as bringing with it the wish to benefit humankind in general, as a result of a process of development which they call *oikeiosis* ('familiarization' or 'appropriation'). This Stoic claim is not problematic in itself in the same way as the other claims noted. But it raises the question whether this claim is conceived as resolving the same kind of problem that is generated by the other theories; and, if so, on what understanding of the problem and of its resolution.⁵

In considering the implications of this issue for my larger project, I give special attention to one version of a type of scholarly interpretation that has become relatively common in recent years. The key point of this type of interpretation is the idea that moral development brings with it the recognition that altruism (other-benefiting virtue) forms an integral part of one's happiness. In the version of this interpretation that I examine most fully, moral development is conceived as bringing with it the recognition that altruism constitutes the deepest kind of 'self-realization', namely, that of one's 'self' as a rational agent. In the preceding chapter, I have considered Irwin's use of this idea to resolve the problem raised by Plato's presentation of the attitude of the philosopher-rulers to re-entering the cave.⁶ The same interpretative pattern also appears in his account of the role of Aristotle's theory of friendship in his larger ethical argument. Troels Engberg-Pedersen applies a similar pattern to the Stoic theory of *oikeiosis*, though with a stronger emphasis on the role of self-consciousness (consciousness of one's self as a rational agent), which is seen as fundamental at every stage of moral development.⁷

I give prominence to these scholarly approaches not because they are the most representative or influential of current discussions of Aristotelian or Stoic ethics⁸ but because they enable me to pursue

⁵ On the theories outlined in this para., see below 5.5, text to nn. 213–33; 5.7.

⁶ See above 4.3; 4.5, text to nn. 122–37; 4.6, text to nn. 230–1.

⁷ On key features of their interpretative approaches, see below 5.2; 5.3, text to nn. 67–74.

⁸ Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen are representative of recent Anglo-American scholarship in emphasizing the relevance of altruism (see below 5.2, text to nn. 34–5, 39–41; 5.6, text to nn. 243–4; 5.7, text to nn. 330–36) but less so in their presentation of altruism as a mode of 'self-realization'. For a full-scale study of the issue in Greek ethical philosophy treated in this chapter, see Annas (1993), part 3, esp. chs. 10–12, which both surveys recent scholarship and offers an independent interpretation; see further n. 85 below.

further the relevance of the contrast between conceptions of the person that is central to this study. I take up two aspects of these scholars' assumptions: one relating to the norm of interpersonal relationships and one relating to the role of theory or reflection in ethical life. On the first point, like some other scholars, they assume the relevance of the norm of altruism (more precisely, of the egoism-altruism contrast) to Greek ethical philosophy. On the second, they assume that a crucial role in ethical development is played by reflection on the idea that the growth of altruistic motivation constitutes the deepest kind of self-realization. I question both these assumptions, and offer alternative accounts which seem to me to be more in line with the kind of psycho-ethical thinking expressed in Greek philosophy. On the question of the norm of interpersonal relationships, I suggest that the dominant Greek ideal is best understood as a combination of 'the shared life' and a proper set of reciprocal relationships, both of these being, in principle, beneficial to both partners. On the question of the role of ethical reflection or theory, I suggest that this is best conceived as a means of developing shared understanding of what a (shared or common) human life, at its best, consists in. I think that adopting this view of the dominant patterns of Greek thinking about the interpersonal norm and the role of ethical theory can help to explain why at least two major thinkers, Plato and Aristotle, present as the best possible human life the one which is *not* the most obviously other-benefiting one.

In developing this line of thought, I stress here, as in connection with Plato's *Republic*, the importance of recognizing certain Greek patterns of thought about the relationship between pre- and post-reflective virtue (4.6 above). As in the *Republic*, Aristotle claims both (1) that post-reflective virtue needs to be grounded in the development of pre-reflective virtue through interpersonal and communal participation, and (2) that properly grounded reflection can modify and transform our understanding of what virtue involves. Both these points bear on his deployment of the idea of 'what each of us is' in ways that are quite different from those suggested in Irwin's interpretation. In some other Greek theories, notably in Plato's *Symposium* and in Epicurean theory, the central thought is rather that the only ethically worthwhile kind of interpersonal or communal participation is that which is shaped by the outcome of properly conducted reflective debate. An idea that is shared by these two forms of Greek theory is that reflective debate is able validly to extend and

reshape the understanding of what a human life, at its best, consists in. This idea, I suggest, forms a key part of the background for the Platonic and Aristotelian preference for the contemplative over the practical (and more obviously other-benefiting) life. A crucial feature of the thinking involved is the idea that *communicating* the ultimate preferability of post-reflective knowledge is the most profound way to benefit others, and that doing so is an integral part of living the best possible human life.⁹ In proposing this line of interpretation, I indicate how it fits into the conception of person that I am calling 'objective-participant' (and *objectivist*-participant). I define this view, in part, by contrast with the kind of conception implied by the interpretations of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, which combines a focus on the individual agent with subjectivity (in the form of an emphasis on 'the self') as well as a certain type of objectivism.

This chapter is arranged as follows. First, I discuss the interpretation of these problematic issues in Greek philosophy in terms of the recognition that the development of altruism constitutes the deepest type of self-realization (5.2). Then, I analyse the ethical and philosophical assumptions underlying this line of interpretation, and outline an alternative ethical and philosophical framework in which to place these problematic issues (5.3). I suggest that this alternative ethical framework provides a better basis for understanding the general form of Aristotle's thinking about the best type of friendship than does the line of interpretation offered by Irwin, which is centred on the ideas of altruism and self-realization (5.4). I develop this point by offering, in the context of my alternative framework, an account of the significance of Aristotle's use of the idea that we should realize 'what each of us is', as deployed both in connection with the ideal friendship (*NE* 9. 4, 8) (5.5) and in connection with the presentation of contemplative wisdom as the highest form of human happiness (*NE* 10. 7–8) (5.6). I consider certain parallels in Platonic and Epicurean philosophy to the ethical and philosophical move made in *NE* 10. 7–8 as well as noting, more briefly, a variant move made in Stoic theory. At various points in this chapter, especially in 5.3, I indicate how this line of argument relates to my larger contrast between subjective-participant and objective-participant conceptions of personality, and underline this point further in Chapter 6.¹⁰

⁹ For this idea, see 4.7 above, text to nn. 286–90; 5.7 below, text to nn. 325–8.

¹⁰ See below 5.3, text to nn. 100–4; 5.7, text to nn. 365–7; 6.7, text to nn. 215–43.

5.2 ALTRUISM AND SELF-REALIZATION

I begin by exploring the type of interpretative approach deployed by Irwin in connection with Plato and Aristotle, and by Engberg-Pedersen in connection with the Stoics. In their discussions, there are two interlinked strands which it is important both to recognize and to distinguish. One is the idea that full moral development involves a certain understanding of 'self-realization': namely, the realization of that 'self' which is disposed to benefit others. The other is that this idea is designed to play a pivotal, or 'Archimedean', role in moral theory. It is an idea which is seen as capable, in principle, of persuading *anyone* (even an immoralist) of the desirability of the morally good life. A related feature is that the self-understanding involved is that of the person as a rational agent.¹¹

Both strands are evident in Irwin's analysis of the central moral argument of Plato's *Republic*, discussed in the previous chapter. A crucial feature of Irwin's interpretation is the claim that the second phase of Plato's educational programme consists of the kind of critical appraisal of one's goals which, if carried through to its conclusions, yields a certain understanding of oneself as a rational agent.¹² The outcome of this self-understanding is that one 'chooses just action and cares about other people's interest for its own sake' (Irwin (1977), 243). Irwin also claims that Plato's account of rational self-understanding constitutes a defence of justice which is valid for 'any rational man aiming at a final good' who accepts that this good should be chosen 'by rational reflection'.¹³ 'Plato has argued that someone who rationally reflects on the kind of life which best suits his whole soul, all his interests, desires, and capacities, will find that he has reason to include just action [understood as altruistic, other-benefiting action] in his life . . .' (1977, 245). Thus, Irwin sees Plato's picture of rational reflection as scrutiny of goals and revision of self-understanding as designed to persuade anyone, even an immoralist such as Thrasymachus, that he has reason to be just and benefit others.¹⁴

¹¹ On the idea that ethical theory can be used as an 'Archimedean' point in this way, see Williams (1985), 28–9; Williams himself sees the idea as illusory.

¹² See refs. in 4.5 above, text to nn. 122–37, esp. Irwin (1977), 240–1: '... [the rational self-lover] is concerned not only with his *future* self, but also with his *future* self, with acting in a way that expresses his ideal of himself.'

¹³ Irwin (1977), 254; see also 266–7.

¹⁴ Irwin (1977), 209–11, 217, 246–8.

As noted earlier, it is a problem for Irwin's interpretation that Plato, in the *Republic*, fails to explain fully how critical reflection (as understood by Irwin) generates altruistic motivation.¹⁵ Irwin acknowledges this problem; but he finds support for his reading of the *Republic* in parts of other middle-period dialogues, especially the account of the 'ascent of desire' in the final mysteries of Diotima's speech in the *Symposium* (210a–212b).¹⁶ The ascent of desire is often interpreted as showing how the love of objective knowledge (the Form of the Beautiful) replaces the love of particular people.¹⁷ Irwin, however, like some other recent scholars, interprets the ascent-passage as showing how knowledge of the Form reshapes, rather than replaces, love-relationships with other people.¹⁸ More precisely, he understands the ascent of desire, like the ascent from the cave in the *Republic*, as constituting the rational appraisal of one's life-shaping goals that is the prerequisite for autonomous recognition of the morally 'fine' (which is how he interprets *to kalon*, usually translated as 'the beautiful').¹⁹ This point is coupled with Diotima's claim that the fundamental form of desire (underlying all other desires) is to 'propagate' in (or on) the beautiful.²⁰ Diotima's account shows how rational appraisal of one's goals leads progressively to the kind of understanding of what is 'fine' or 'beautiful' that, in turn, generates the desire to 'propagate' on this by means of virtuous, other-benefiting actions.²¹ In this way, Irwin thinks that the *Symposium* clarifies how the self-understanding that derives from rational criticism of one's goals promotes altruistic motives, and thus supplements the *Republic's* account of the motivation of the philosopher-rulers.²²

¹⁵ See 4.3 above, text to nn. 84–7.

¹⁶ On the methodological problems involved in supplementing the argument of one Platonic dialogue by drawing on another in this way, see Gill (1979) and Roachnik (1988).

¹⁷ This is sometimes called the 'exclusive' interpretation (adopted by e.g. Vlastos (1981), ch. 1), by contrast with the 'inclusive' interpretation adopted by Irwin and some others, including Kosman (1976) and Price (1989), 43–5.

¹⁸ Irwin (1977), 167–9.

¹⁹ Irwin (1977), 170–2, 234–5. In *Phdr.*, the role of 'recollection' and the virtuous person's 'madness' is interpreted as conveying the same point, 172–4, 239–41. On the basically Kantian pattern presupposed, see 4.3 above, text to nn. 79–85.

²⁰ *Smp.* 206c–e, esp. e5. On the fact that this propagation or procreation (*γέννησις*) has the further aim of self-immortalization (a fact not emphasized by Irwin), see 206e7–207a4 and see further 5.7 below, text to nn. 300–5.

²¹ *Smp.* 208e–209e, 210c1–2, 212a3–7; Irwin (1977), 167–9.

²² Irwin (1977), 169, 234–5, 237, 240–2, 267–8. For an alternative reading of

A similar line of interpretation is also applied by Irwin to Aristotle, making use of texts which, in certain respects, seem to provide more promising material for this approach. Irwin (1988) is a study of Aristotle's 'first principles', that is, of the interconnections between different areas of philosophy which can be validated by properly grounded argument. Although there are some significant conceptual changes in the approach from (1977),²³ Irwin's treatment of the present topic reflects the (broadly) Kantian framework which informs this reading of the *Republic*. Aristotle's ethical approach, like Plato's, is taken to be shaped so as to meet the challenge of 'a radical critic of common ethical beliefs'. The kind of critic which Aristotle confronts is one who is capable of seeing herself as a rational agent, whose life is organized around an overall goal.²⁴ The claim, in *NE* 1. 7, that the distinctively human good consists in the actualization of our rational capacities 'according to virtue' (*kat' areten*) is taken to form an important part of this response to the moral critic or sceptic.²⁵ The general form of Aristotle's argument is thought to be that it is only the development of a virtuous character that brings with it the co-ordination of our psychic functions and the stability of this psychic structure over time; and it is only this stability that realizes and perpetuates our existence as rational agents. 'Virtue' includes other-benefiting (altruistic) virtue, as manifested in interpersonal and communal activities. But such virtue can still be conceived, and presented to a moral sceptic, as an extension of the form of life that enables us best to realize our existence as rational agents.²⁶

In developing this interpretation, Irwin draws especially on three chapters of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (9. 4, 8, 9) in which Aristotle reflects on issues raised by his account of the best type of friendship

Diotima's mysteries, see 5.7 below, text to nn. 293–328. Irwin (1995) contains a broadly similar line of argument; see chs. 17–18, esp. 288–91, 292–4, 296–7, 298–303, 310–13, 316–17; see also Ch. 4 n. 72 above.

²³ A key innovation is the idea of 'strong dialectic', ch. 3 and 476–81, which deepens substantially the conception of dialectic deployed in (1977), 223–6. However, for the claim that this conception of strong dialectic is also Kantian, see Wardy (1991), 93–6; see also 5.5 below, text to nn. 167–8.

²⁴ Irwin (1988), 348–9 (also refs. in nn. 167–8 below), and 345–6, 359–61. Cf. Irwin's similar reading of the function of Plato's argument, text to nn. 13–14 above.

²⁵ *NE* 1098^b7–8 and 16–17; Irwin (1988), 364–5.

²⁶ Irwin (1988), ch. 16, 368–72; ch. 17, esp. 376–81, 385–8; ch. 18, esp. 390–3, 395–9, 404, 406. See further, on the relationship between Irwin's account of the argument of *NE* and current scholarly debate, 5.6 below, text to nn. 240–4.

(8. 3–5). Irwin draws, in particular, on two ideas which figure in those three chapters: the idea—as we are inclined to put it—that we have a 'true self' (in Aristotelian terms, 'what each of us is' or 'seems to be'), and that, in the best type of friendship, the friend is 'another self' or 'another oneself' (*allos* or *heteros autos*). These ideas are taken in conjunction with two points which figure in Aristotle's account of the best kind of friendship: that friendship includes concern for the other 'for his sake' (*ekeinou heneka*); more precisely, that such concern must be for what the friend is 'in himself' (*kath' hauton*) or 'because of himself' (*di' hauton*).²⁷

These ideas are used to illustrate Aristotle's claim (as Irwin understands this) that the development and exercise of virtue constitute the most effective way of realizing our nature as rational agents. The idea that the virtuous person acts 'for the sake of the reasoning part [*to dianoetikon*], which is what each of us seems to be' is taken to express the rational agent's proper concern to perpetuate her 'self' and 'essence' as a (practical) rational agent.²⁸ Aristotle's claims that the virtuous person is psychologically integrated and stable in a way that the non-virtuous person is not and that she is, therefore, capable of consistent self-love are taken to be part of this line of argument.²⁹ The underlying point is thought to be that a fully rational selection of long-term goals necessarily leads one to give priority to virtue, and that living a life in line with this priority will promote the rational agent's goal of stabilizing and perpetuating her essential 'self' as a rational agent.³⁰

Other aspects of Aristotle's argument in these chapters are seen as supporting the claim that the kind of virtue which brings about rational self-realization must include altruism. Aristotle presents as conventional the idea that proper friendship involves concern for the

²⁷ See refs. in nn. 28–33 below.

²⁸ *NE* 1166^a16–17 (more broadly 14–23), 1169^a2–3 (more broadly 1168^b28–1169^a6); Irwin (1988), 376–7, 379. On the contrasting use of the idea of realizing 'what each of us seems to be' in connection with theoretical contemplation (*NE* 1178^a2–3, more broadly, 1177^b26–1178^a7), not discussed by Irwin, see nn. 37–8 below.

²⁹ *NE* 1166^a10–29, 1168^b28–1169^a18; Irwin (1988), 377–81.

³⁰ See e.g. Irwin (1988), 384 (taken in the context of 381–7): 'The virtuous person expresses his rational agency in choosing the ends he pursues and in guiding his actions in accordance with that choice. In subordinating other ends to his rational agency, he forms a stable self for which he has the proper sort of concern.' For the role of second-order reasoning (reflection on ends) in giving priority to virtue and realizing one's selfhood as a rational agent, see above, 4.3, text to nn. 75–87; 4.5, text to nn. 122–37.

friend 'for his sake' (*ekeinou heneka*), that is (as Irwin renders) 'altruistic concern'. But Aristotle adds the further requirement that such concern should be with what the friend is 'in himself' (*kath' hauton*) or 'because of himself' (*di' hauton*). This is taken by Irwin as signifying that the virtuous person is concerned with the friend's virtuous character, which realizes the friend's essence as a rational agent, just as he is concerned with his own virtuous character, which realizes his own essence as a rational agent.³¹ Indeed, the virtuous person is *as* concerned with the friend, in this respect, as he is with himself, a point conveyed in the Aristotelian idea of the friend as a 'second self' (*allos* or *heteros autos*). But, because of the completeness of his other-concern, the friend can serve as a means of extending his own self-concern (since the friend is 'another self'). Thus, the virtuous person's altruism constitutes a further dimension of his concern to realize his own essential self as a rational agent.³² In this way, in Irwin's view, the contrast between egoism and altruism is resolved in a way that enables Aristotle to meet the objections of a moral sceptic (provided that the latter accepts Aristotle's conception of what rational agency involves).³³

Some other recent discussions of Aristotle's theory of friendship share aspects of Irwin's analysis. Thus, for instance, several scholars take the view that, in NE 9. 4, 8, and 9, Aristotle should not be seen as explaining the (apparent) altruism of friendship in egoistic terms, but rather as showing how (real) altruism forms a valid part of the virtuous person's happiness. It is precisely *because* the good person is as concerned with the friend (and concerned with him 'for his sake') as he is with himself that the friend can serve as a 'second self' and thus play an equal role in promoting the good person's happiness.³⁴ The main points on which Irwin draws to support the idea that altruistic friendship can form an integral part of one's self-realization as a rational agent are also emphasized by other recent accounts.³⁵ However, no other account gives this nexus of ideas quite

³¹ NE 1155^b31-4, 1156^a11-12, 16-19, 1156^b10-11, 1157^a18-19, 1157^b3, 1159^a9-10, 1166^a2-4; EE 1237^b1-6. See Irwin (1988), 376-7, 390-1, 395-7.

³² NE 1166^a31-2, 1169^b6-7, 1170^b6-7; EE 1245^a30. See Irwin (1988), 391-6. See also Irwin's comparable analysis of Platonic thinking in (1977), 240-2; (1995), 306-13, esp. 312.

³³ Irwin (1988), 389-90, 396-7; see also n. 24 above.

³⁴ See e.g. Annas (1977), esp. 542, 544; Kahn (1981), esp. 28-9; Kraut (1989), 131-44.

³⁵ See refs. in nn. 28, 29, 31 above; also e.g. Kraut (1989), chs. 2 and 6; Price (1989),

the same (broadly) Kantian shape as Irwin does, for whom the altruism (other-benefiting virtue) of the good person's friendship is a crucial precondition of the good person's self-realization as a rational agent.³⁶ One point not noted by Irwin (and one that clearly raises difficulties for his analysis) is that Aristotle, in NE 10. 7-8, deploys the idea that we should realize 'what each of us would seem to be' in connection with theoretical contemplation rather than the practical, other-benefiting action which Irwin emphasizes.³⁷ The question whether, and (if so) how, this claim is compatible with the kind of 'self-realization' associated with other-benefiting friendship has been taken up by some recent discussions, and is one that I pursue later.³⁸

An analogous problem in Epicurean thinking about friendship has been analysed in a broadly similar way to these problems in Aristotelian thinking, but without reference to the idea of 'self-realization'. The problem lies in seeing how Epicurus' commendation of friendship (and, indeed, friendship of a kind that involves deep commitment to the friend) is compatible with the pursuit of one's own pleasure, understood as freedom from pain (*aponia*) and freedom from distress (*ataraxia*), taken to be the proper goal of a human life. This problem seems to have been recognized as a problem by later Epicureans, who proposed various means of resolving it.³⁹ Epicurus himself seems to have framed his position in a way that accentuated the issue most strongly. He both, allegedly, 'takes on the greatest pains on behalf of his friends' and insists that you should 'refer each of your actions on every occasion to nature's end'; that is, to one's own pursuit of pleasure.⁴⁰ The line of explanation considered, and embraced with more or less conviction, by some recent discussions, is that Epicurus both sees friendship as a means

ch. 4. On Price's approach, see 5.7 below, text to nn. 297 and 306; on Kraut's, see 5.6, text to nn. 243-50.

³⁶ On the modern philosophical parallels to Irwin's post-Kantian approach, see 5.3 below, text to nn. 67-74.

³⁷ NE 10. 7 (1177^b26-1178^a7, esp. 1178^a2-3). The analogous issue in Plato is, of course, emphasized by Irwin (1977), 236-7, 242-3; (1995), 298-301; see 4.6 above, text to nn. 176, 230-1.

³⁸ See e.g. Rorty (1980b), 388-91; Kahn (1981), 34-40; Kraut (1989), 128-31, 347-53; and see 5.6 below.

³⁹ See LS 22E-I, O, taken with discussion in LS vol. 1, 137-8, LS 21B esp. (1); also Mitsis (1988), 101-12.

⁴⁰ LS 22H and 21E(2), tr. as in LS. On the special difficulties raised by the latter point, see Annas (1987), 15-16.

of maximizing one's own happiness (conceived as pleasure) and insists that, if friendship is to fulfil this role, it must be 'real', that is, altruistic friendship.⁴¹

There are some points of similarity between this latter line of thought and Irwin's approach to Plato and Aristotle. However, the line of interpretation which is closest to Irwin's, in the relevant aspects, is that of Engberg-Pedersen, as applied to the Stoic theory of *oikeiosis* ('familiarization').⁴² Both discussions stress the ideas that full moral development centres on becoming aware of oneself as a rational agent, and that such self-awareness plays a crucial role in acquiring altruistic motivation. Both also stress the idea that the Greek philosophers' presentation of this process is designed to persuade, in principle, anyone that it is desirable for a rational agent to become ethically good.⁴³ These ideas feature prominently in Engberg-Pedersen's analysis of the Stoic theory, which is based especially on Cicero's account.⁴⁴ On virtually any reading, Cicero's account of the process of full human moral development identifies three, more or less closely linked, stages.⁴⁵ The first is common to all animals and consists in a rudimentary self-consciousness and in the development of patterns of behaviour that are adaptively directed at preserving one's own constitution. The second, which is peculiar to human beings, consists in the development of rationality. This is expressed, firstly, in the deliberate pursuit of those 'goods' (such as health and property) for which, as human beings, we have a natural preference, and, secondly and more importantly, in doing so in the right (that is, virtuous) way. Carried to its conclusion, this process leads to the recognition that the 'primary natural goods' (such as health and property) are 'matters of indifference' (*adiaphora*) in comparison with virtue, which is the only thing that is truly valuable and the proper object of choice. Thirdly, human beings extend their concern and 'familiarization' (*oikeiosis*) from those who are naturally

⁴¹ See further 5.7 below, text to nn. 329–49.

⁴² Engberg-Pedersen (1986) and (1990b), summarized in (1990a), 118–27. *Oikeiosis* is an abstract noun cognate to the adjective *oikeios* ('one's own'), i.e. part of one's own house (*oikos*). It is variously translated as 'appropriation', 'familiarization', 'self-extension'.

⁴³ On the latter point, see Engberg-Pedersen (1986), 158, (1990b), 43–4, 72; on Irwin's parallel view, see text to nn. 13–14, 24 above.

⁴⁴ *De finibus* (Fin.) 3, 16–26, 62–8.

⁴⁵ This threefold division is relatively uncontroversial; there is much more dispute about how to subdivide these stages further, and about how closely the second and third stages are connected; see further Annas (1993), 275–6.

seen as 'their own' (*oikeios*) to all human beings as such, and are thus motivated to work for the benefit of humankind.⁴⁶

What is striking in Engberg-Pedersen's interpretation is the stress on the close interconnection of these stages, especially the first two, and, relatedly, the presentation of the whole process as the progressive development of self-consciousness and self-love. Although he acknowledges that the first stage (the one in which the idea of self-consciousness is mostly emphasized by Cicero) is common to all animals, he sees this stage as providing the basis, in human beings, for a relatively complex type of self-consciousness (consciousness of oneself as an individual 'I' or subject) and for attachment to the 'self' as so understood.⁴⁷ The second stage is presented as the growth of consciousness of, and attachment to, oneself *as rational*; in his account, it is crucial that it is *oneself* (the individual 'I' or subject) that one sees as rational. This process is taken to bring with it the (post-reflective) awareness that rational self-realization inheres in acting virtuously rather than in pursuing the natural goods that are the outcome of one's earlier (pre-reflective) self-love.⁴⁸ The third stage is seen as the recognition that one's virtuous rationality carries with it 'an other-regarding attitude of care' not only for the people who are specifically 'one's own' but for all rational agents as such, who share the core element of one's own identity.⁴⁹ Thus, in this account, as in Irwin's account of Plato and Aristotle, consciousness of oneself as a rational agent is seen as a crucial element in the development of altruistic motivation; and the presentation of the idea by Greek philosophers is seen as designed to persuade any rational agent of the benefits of becoming ethically good.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Fin. 3, 16, 20–1, 50–4, 62–3, summarized in Gill (1990c), 143–51; for text, translation, and commentary, see Wright (1991); key extracts given as LS 57F, 59D.

⁴⁷ Engberg-Pedersen (1986), 150–3; (1990a), 120–1; (1990b), 66–71, referring esp. to Fin. 3, 16.

⁴⁸ Engberg-Pedersen (1986), 156–62; (1990b), 84–7, 100–15, esp. 104–6, 114–15, referring to Fin. 3, 20–1, 50–3, 58–9, and subdividing this process into several linked stages.

⁴⁹ Engberg-Pedersen (1986), 175–7; (1990b), 123–5, quotation from p. 125.

⁵⁰ See n. 43 above. For an alternative reading of the Stoic theory, see 5.5 below, text to nn. 209–33.

5.3 ALTERNATIVE ETHICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL MODELS

In this section, I explore (what seem to me to be) the ethical and philosophical underpinnings of the interpretative approach adopted by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen and offer an alternative framework for understanding the Greek theories that they discuss and others which raise comparable issues. I am concerned both with their assumption that Greek thinking about interpersonal ethics is best analysed in terms of the norm of altruism, and with their belief that Greek ethical theory is designed to show any rational agent that altruism constitutes the deepest kind of self-realization. I deal first with the question of the Greek interpersonal norm, and then with Greek philosophical thinking about the role of ethical theory. The contrast between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of the person is relevant to the question of the role of ethical theory rather than that of the interpersonal norm. But I indicate ways in which Greek or modern thinking about interpersonal norms helps to set the framework for thinking about the role of theory (and for doing so in a subjective-individualist or objective-participant way). The points made in general terms about Greek thinking are pursued in more detail later in the chapter.

I assume that any actual or imaginable moral framework gives scope for the negotiation of possible conflicts between the pursuit of one's own goal and the claims of others. Relatedly, I assume that any moral framework provides some way of characterizing, and commending, the motivation to benefit others. However, I think that the characterization of this issue in terms of the contrast between egoism and altruism is not universal, but is a function of certain moral frameworks, specifically, the modern Western one.⁵¹ There are various ways of framing the egoism-altruism contrast in modern thought, which carry different ethical and conceptual implications.⁵²

⁵¹ The egoism-altruism contrast is sometimes used as an acultural absolute, e.g. in ethology and anthropology. What I am assuming, however, is that this contrast represents one, culturally laden, version of a more general pattern, which should be characterized in the more neutral terms of the conflict between one's own good and the claims of others (though even this formulation may be culturally laden). See further Gill (1998a), esp. 304-8, on the way in which different ethical frameworks can give scope for other-benefiting motivation.

⁵² Kahn (1981), 20-1, 24-5, and Kraut (1989), 78-86, assume ways of thinking in which egoism and altruism are less sharply opposed than they are in the models outlined in text to nn. 55-66 below. See also n. 130 below.

I outline three such models, each of which are relevant, in different ways, to understanding the interpretative approaches of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, and the issues that these raise.

These three models display certain features in common. One is the grading of interpersonal actions by reference to whether they express egoistic (selfish) motives or altruistic (selfless) ones. Secondly, each model offers some kind of explanatory framework for the idea that moral (understood as other-benefiting) claims have priority over self-benefiting ones. A third feature is the framing of moral life in terms of a contrast between 'I' (or 'the self') and 'the other'. A fourth feature is the idea that altruism is displayed, above all, in contexts in which it is *any* other who is being benefited, rather than an 'other' who has a specially close relationship towards one-self.⁵³ Of these features, it is the contrast between 'self' and 'other' that is most relevant to the distinction between conceptions of the person with which I am principally concerned here. This way of analysing ethical motivation helps to focus attention on the individual moral agent and her state of mind rather than on the quality of the forms of shared life in which she participates.⁵⁴ This way of thinking lays the basis for understanding ethical motivation as a form of self-denial or self-negation. Also, it provides the starting-point for the apparently paradoxical move in which altruism (or self-denial) can come to be understood as the deepest type of self-realization. Thus, although the egoism-altruism contrast is not, in itself, part of the way of thinking about the person that I am calling 'subjective-individualist', it can be seen as, in this way, giving the basis for a subjective-individualist account of the role of ethical theory or reflection.

The first model of thinking about egoism and altruism which I note here, the influence of which on modern Western thought can hardly be overstated, is the Christian one. Central to Christian thought (in stark contrast to Greek religion) is the idea of God as a source of unlimited love, and also the idea that each individual creature has a special status as the recipient of this love.⁵⁵ The key

⁵³ In other words, the conception of altruism involved is systematic (it applies universally, not just to particular others) as well as impartial or disinterested; I owe this formulation to Richard Seaford.

⁵⁴ For a contrasting way of understanding ethical life and motivation, see text to nn. 78-86 below.

⁵⁵ Matthew 6: 26, 10: 29, Luke 12: 6.

symbol of this love is the cross, signifying that self-sacrifice has supreme value both in itself and as the necessary preliminary (which is not the same as the instrumental means) to a higher state of being.⁵⁶ Relatedly, Christianity places a specially strong demand on each individual person: namely, that one should return God's love in one's relationship with others, more precisely with *any* other, 'my neighbour', as well as with God.⁵⁷ A corollary of this is that such love should be, like God's, unqualified and self-sacrificing, and not informed, even by implication, by self-interest.⁵⁸

Kant's moral theory is explicitly presented as independent of any religious basis (though, from a historico-cultural perspective, it can be regarded as a secularized version of a specifically Protestant type of Christianity).⁵⁹ As we have seen, central to Kant's theory is the idea that, as human beings, we are all (at the 'transcendental' level, at any rate) capable of acting as 'rational beings' or 'persons'. As rational beings, we are capable of exercising autonomy of the will by legislating for ourselves universal principles which have overriding priority (the 'categorical imperative').⁶⁰ One formulation of this imperative, which can be understood as a secularized version of God's command to love one's neighbour as oneself, is that: 'you should always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means but always at the same time as an end.' This principle applies universally or impartially, in a way that gives no ethical status to one's localized attachments or relationships, let alone to one's own desires and inclinations. To put it differently, it is *any* other whom we must treat as an 'end in herself', and, if so, our own advantage (or that of those with whom we

⁵⁶ Matthew 16: 24–8, Mark 8: 34–8, Luke 9: 23–7.

⁵⁷ Mark 12: 30–1, Luke 10: 25–8.

⁵⁸ Kahn (1981), 23, claims that the Christian doctrine that 'the love of one's neighbour may be recommended as the path [i.e. instrumental means] to one's salvation' implies the logical priority of egoism over altruism; but this is a very controversial reading of Christian doctrine. On the history of Christian debate about how far loving God can also accommodate self-love, see Kenny (1992), 54 and n. 15.

⁵⁹ In Kant's moral theory, as in Protestant (specifically, Lutheran) Christianity, it is crucial that the individual 'wills' for herself the universal principles of morality, conceived as 'imperatives' or 'laws' (like the Ten Commandments), rather than simply accepting them as a function of her participation in the life of the Church. See further MacIntyre (1985), 43–7.

⁶⁰ See 1.1 above, text to nn. 27–31; and on the idea of freedom of the will as a 'transcendental' human capacity, see 6.6, below, text to nn. 150–2.

are associated) is of no importance in comparison with the absolute claims of duty.⁶¹

As well as noting these key influences on modern Western thought, I also note the model found in a famous work of contemporary philosophy, Derek Parfit's *Reasons and Persons* (1984), which bears especially on the issue of the role of moral theory. Parfit's position is explicitly non-religious; it is also Utilitarian (based on the principle of maximizing human benefit) and specifically opposed to the Kantian principle that people should be treated as autonomous, ethically independent 'persons', in a strong sense.⁶² Despite these differences from the two previous models, his conception of 'rational altruism' also contains, in its own way, the emphases on negating oneself and on benefiting *any* other that are present in those models. A crucial part of his argument is the claim that personal identity (unique selfhood or being *me*) is not a deep metaphysical fact, as is often supposed in modern Western thought, but simply a matter of degree, that is, of psychological connections that hold good only more or less for a single person in a single life. Parfit regards adopting this 'reductive' view of personal identity as a necessary preliminary for acquiring the right (that is, impartial and impersonal) understanding of morality. In other words, adopting the right understanding of the 'self' plays a crucial role in undermining the importance that we give to our 'selves' and in promoting the kind of disinterested concern for others that is, as he argues, properly expressed in maximizing the well-being of human beings on a general basis.⁶³

In each of these three models, though in different ways, the validation of generalized benefiting of others is coupled with that of selflessness or self-negation; and this combination of norms is taken to apply to psycho-ethical attitudes as well as interpersonal relationships. In the Christian model, both 'denying yourself' and coming to 'love your neighbour' (whoever this is) are presented as integral aspects of a full-hearted attempt to return God's unqualified love.⁶⁴

⁶¹ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 91 (from which the quotation is taken, italics deleted), 63–6, 92–3. See Irwin (1977), 342–3 n. 27, who underlines the impartiality of the theory and notes the possible link with the Christian idea of loving one's neighbour.

⁶² Parfit (1984), 453–4, and ch. 15.

⁶³ Parfit (1984), part 3, esp. chs. 11 and 15, summarized in his 445–7. For (critical) assessment of this strategy of using a revised conception of personal identity to promote a properly moral attitude, see Williams (1984); also Williams (1981a), pp. 5–14.

⁶⁴ See text to nn. 55–7 above.

The Kantian norm is that one should subordinate oneself to universal principles (including that of treating any other as an 'end in herself') in a spirit of emotion-free commitment to duty, sometimes characterized as 'reverence for the law'.⁶⁵ Parfit claims that adopting a 'reductive' view of personal identity (of what it means to be *me*) carries with it a fundamental reshaping of attitudes about oneself of a kind that reduces the significance of one's death as well as intensifying one's concern with the lives of others.⁶⁶

In ways already indicated, ethical thinking of this general type underlies the interpretative approach to Greek ethical philosophy adopted by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen (together with some other scholars), in which the egoism-altruism contrast, and the development of altruistic motivation, are given a central place.⁶⁷ The other key feature of the approach of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, the idea that the development of altruism can be presented (in principle, to *any* rational agent) as the deepest kind of self-realization, can also be clarified by reference to these models. In a sense, the kernel of this latter idea is already present in the Christian claim that 'whoever will save his life shall lose it; and whoever will lose his life for my sake shall save it'.⁶⁸ However, the form in which this idea manifests itself in Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen is more directly related to certain modern formulations. Although Kant thinks that it is a function of our existence as rational beings to exercise our capacity for autonomy by recognizing the absolute claims of duty, his argument is not that *anyone* can be led to see the force of this moral claim by reflecting on our nature as rational beings.⁶⁹ But a number of contemporary

⁶⁵ See text to nn. 59–61 above; and 4.2 above, text to nn. 9–12.

⁶⁶ Parfit (1984), 281–2 including (281) this comment on the effect on Parfit himself of adopting his revised conception of personal identity: 'There is still a difference between my life and the lives of other people. But the difference is less. Other people are closer. I am less concerned about the rest of my life, and more concerned about the lives of others.' See also ch. 15, 332–9, on the consequences for moral reasoning of this reshaping of attitudes.

⁶⁷ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 13–22, 31–6, 39–41, 49. For specific points of contact with the modern models of altruism just outlined, see nn. 73–4 below.

⁶⁸ Matthew 16: 25 (also Mark 8: 34, Luke 9: 24), taken with n. 58 above. A distinct, though related, point, made esp. by M. Foucault, is that Christian practices of self-scrutiny, directed at promoting unselfish purity of motivation, prefigured, and provided a basis for, modern forms of self-examination such as psychoanalysis. See Foucault (1988), 39–49; Hutton (1988), 131–3, summarizing Foucault's views; also Dumont (1985) and Paden (1988).

⁶⁹ Kant assumes that recognizing the absolute claim of duty is characteristic of an ordinary, pre-reflective moral attitude (*ML*, pp. 69–70); he aims to provide a philo-

philosophers, working either in a post-Kantian or Utilitarian framework, have made this latter move, arguing that reflection on our rationality can show us that it is rational to be good.⁷⁰ Parfit's argument for the kind of rational altruism which he advocates is of this general type. His argument also gives a central role to the idea that changing our understanding of our personal identity (what it means to be *me*) can play a pivotal, or 'Archimedean', role in leading us to adopt this type of rationally grounded altruism.⁷¹ Parfit's theory thus represents an exceptionally clear statement of an idea implied in other contemporary discussions: that a proper understanding of our selfhood as rational agents leads to the recognition that altruism constitutes the deepest mode of self-realization. As we have seen elsewhere, the idea that 'being yourself' has substantive ethical value is sometimes associated, in modern thinking, with radical ethical individualism such as that of Nietzsche and Sartre.⁷² Parfit's theory shows that this idea can also be associated with the valuation of altruism (in our culture, a standard norm of interpersonal ethics).

The interpretative approaches of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen seem to be informed by this type of recent theorizing as well as by Kant. As just noted, Kant sees it as a function of our existence as rational agents that we are able to recognize the overriding claims of morality, including those of (his version of) altruism. Both scholars see analogies between this Kantian idea and Greek philosophical theories which, in their view, present the development of altruism as the product of the full development of human rationality.⁷³ However, the line of thought which they attribute to the Greek philosophers is not strictly Kantian. Rather, it resembles the idea in contemporary post-Kantian and Utilitarian thinkers, such as Rawls, Gewirth, and Parfit, that philosophy can, in principle, show anyone that it is rational to be good. Both scholars indicate their familiarity with contemporary theories of this general type. Engberg-Pedersen connects his way of interpreting Stoic theory with current debate about the

sophical explanation of this attitude (as far as this is possible, *ML*, pp. 121–3), not to promote this attitude by demonstrating that it is rational to hold it.

⁷⁰ e.g. Rawls (1971), Gewirth (1977).

⁷¹ See text to nn. 62–3, 66 above; on the role of the 'Archimedean' point in moral argument, Williams (1985), 28–9, and text to n. 74 below.

⁷² See above 2.3, text to nn. 45–8, 2.5, text to nn. 98–109.

⁷³ On Irwin (1977), see above 4.3, text to nn. 72–87; 4.5, text to nn. 122–37; see also Irwin (1988), 360–1, Engberg-Pedersen (1990a), 110–12.

validity of the idea that morality can be grounded in the idea of what it means to be a rational agent. Irwin also discusses an earlier version of this type of theory by the nineteenth-century thinker, T. H. Green.⁷⁴

I now outline an alternative account of Greek philosophical thinking about the norms of interpersonal ethics life and the role of ethical theory to that offered by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen. I am not denying that their approach, and that of other scholars who argue for the relevance of altruism to Greek ethical philosophy,⁷⁵ represents a much more constructive and perceptive response than that of some earlier scholars, for whom Greek ethical theory, because it does not conform to strictly Kantian norms, is seen as unacceptably egoistic in character.⁷⁶ Nor am I denying that we can find in Greek ethical philosophy attitudes which *we* are naturally inclined to interpret as expressing a positive valuation of altruism. But I do not think that those attitudes are best interpreted in the light of the models of altruism outlined earlier.⁷⁷ I think that they are better understood by reference to the combination of two other norms: those of the shared life and of (proper modes of) reciprocity. Central to the first norm is the idea that the people concerned have shared interests and objectives and a shared mode of life. Central to the second norm is the idea that the relationship involved is mutually beneficial and (in principle) balanced in the benefit provided. From Homer onwards, these two norms are complementary (though also overlapping). The idea of the shared life is especially linked with the relationship between members of the same family-group and close friends. That of reciprocity is especially linked with a larger nexus of associative bonds, including person-person and person-group relationships.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Irwin refers to Rawls (1971) in (1977), ch. 8, esp. 340–1, nn. 2, 5, 18. He refers to Parfit (1984), in (1988), 610–11 (n. 11), also 608 (n. 44); and (1995), 390 n. 24. On his account of Green's version of Kant, see 6.6 below, text to n. 156. Engberg-Pedersen (1990a) places his account of Stoic theory in the context of Kantian and anti-Kantian debates about the role of rationality and personhood in modern moral theory.

⁷⁵ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 34–41.

⁷⁶ See e.g. Prichard (1968), ch. 1; Warnock (1971), 89–92; and see further 4.3 above, text to n. 73; see also Ross (1923), 208, and, responding to this type of view, Williams (1985), 31–2, 49–53; see further Annas (1993), 224–6.

⁷⁷ See text to nn. 55–64 above. Nor do I think that they are best interpreted in the light of the models assumed by Kahn and Kraut (n. 52 above), in which the contrast between egoism and altruism, while central, is less sharply drawn than in the models outlined.

⁷⁸ On reciprocity, see above 2.6, text to nn. 127–34; 2.7, text to nn. 144–51, 173–4; 3.4, text to nn. 110–14; 4.6, text to nn. 238–42. On the 'shared life', see 5.4 below, text

Both normative patterns provide a framework which gives value to the motivation to benefit others, but such motivation is not conceived in the same way as it is in a framework centred on the egoism–altruism contrast.

In the latter framework, there is assumed to be a fundamental contrast between acting for oneself (or for 'me', the *ego*) and for the other (*alter*).⁷⁹ The Greek framework centres rather on the idea of shared or mutual benefit, in which *we* pursue *our* benefit. There is a presumption that relationships provide a context in which it is proper to pursue benefit; the crucial contrast lies between doing so in the wrong and in the right way. This contrast can be conceived as that between 'negative' and 'balanced' (or 'generalized') reciprocity, or between unjust and just ways of living the shared life.⁸⁰ In the egoism–altruism framework, as exemplified earlier, special value is attached to the kind of 'pure' altruism that inheres in the desire to benefit *any* other, regardless of whether or not that other is closely connected with oneself.⁸¹ The Greek framework places special value rather on exceptionally other-benefiting acts and attitudes performed within relationships which are conceived as, normally and in principle, beneficial to both partners. Thus, actions and attitudes which *we* may be inclined to see as displaying selflessness or altruism are, typically, those in which the defence or maintenance of the reciprocal relationship or shared life requires one partner to undergo some risk or surrender some good for the sake of his *oikos*, *philos*, or *polis* ('family', 'friend', or 'city-state').⁸² Exceptionally, special value is attached, both in Greek poetry and philosophy, to the giving of this response to someone who falls outside these forms of relationship;⁸³ this is particularly so in Stoic thinking. However, in Stoic thinking and elsewhere, this move is usually coupled with the

to nn. 117–19, 130. On overlap between these norms, see 5.4 below, text to nn. 132–3, 135–9. See further, on these norms and their interrelationship, Gill (1998a).

⁷⁹ See text to n. 53 above.

⁸⁰ On modes of reciprocity, see refs. in n. 78 above. The *agon* in E. *Med.*, as analysed in 2.9 above, text to nn. 217–48, may be taken as exemplifying the dramatization of issues of justice and injustice in connection with the ideal of the shared life.

⁸¹ See text to nn. 53, 57, 61, 63 above.

⁸² See e.g. such standard exemplars as Alcestis and Achilles, cited in Pl. *Smp.* 179 b–e; see also NE 1159^a28–33 (on which see n. 115 below) and 1169^a18–^b2 (on which see 5.4 below, text to nn. 134–9).

⁸³ See e.g. S. *Ai.* 121–6, 1346–75; Hom. *Il.* 24. 507–51, 596–676; on debate about the ethical significance of the Achilles–Priam scene, see Zanker (1998) and Postlethwaite (1998).

thought that those outside can be brought, conceptually, *within* the central locus of concern—the family, friendship-bond, or city-state, and made ‘one’s own’ (*oikeios*) in this sense.⁸⁴

This framework of thinking about norms of interpersonal behaviour can be seen as informing the overall shape or structure of Greek ethical theory.⁸⁵ In the modern models of altruism considered earlier, a metaphysical framework is offered (centred on the ideas of God, the rational agent, and personal identity, respectively) which validates the norm of seeking another’s good rather than one’s own. The Greek theories offer metaphysical frameworks, of various kinds, which validate the idea that human beings properly pursue their good (conceived as ‘happiness’, *eudaimonia*). I do not think that this pursuit is appropriately conceived either as egoistic in character or as altruistic (or as altruism reconceived as self-realization). Rather, the pursuit of happiness is seen as the central focus of a mode of life that involves shared benefit or reciprocation of benefit. Pursuing happiness is something that *we* do for *our* benefit; the benefit embodied in happiness is conceived as part of a shared life or a nexus of modes of reciprocity. I think that we should situate in this framework a question which is central to Greek ethical theory, that of the kind of life (*bios*) that constitutes the highest mode of human happiness, a question which tends to become focused in the choice between the ‘practical’ and ‘contemplative’ or ‘philosophical’ life.⁸⁶ The life chosen is chosen because it is best: it confers, or rather constitutes, the greatest possible benefit. But this choice is not, therefore, an egoistic choice. The life is chosen as being best *for us* (that is, as part

⁸⁴ See e.g. LS 57F, G, 67K, L; see further nn. 229–39, 363 below, and Gill (1998a), esp. 325–7.

⁸⁵ On the overall shape of Greek ethical theory (in partial contrast to modern theory), see Annas (1993), esp. introd. and ch. 22. Much of her account is compatible with that offered in this book, esp. on the role of ‘nature’ in Greek ethical theory (see her ch. 3 and 6.5 below), and on the idea that ethical theory leads you to ‘revise your priorities’ (her part 4 and 5.6–7 below). I emphasize more than she does the idea that ethical reflection ‘about my life as a whole’ (her ch. 1) is conceived in the ‘objective-participant’ form of shared debate about the best possible human life. Annas also sees problems in analysing Greek interpersonal ethics in terms of egoism and altruism (225–6), though I draw a sharper distinction between Greek and modern thinking on this subject than she does in her chs. 10–12.

⁸⁶ On the contrast between practical and contemplative lives, see e.g. Arist. *NE* 10. 7–8, prefigured in Pl. *Grg.* 484c–488a, and Hom. *Il.* 9. 410–6. See above 2.7, text to nn. 183–5; 4.2, text to nn. 54–64; Gill (1983b), 470 n. 8; and 5.6–7 below. On the contrasting metaphysical frameworks assumed by the models of altruism outlined, see text to nn. 55–66 above.

of a shared or reciprocated life). It is also chosen as objectively best, in principle, for all human beings (that is for *us*, as human beings, and not simply for *me*). To determine correctly what this life is, and to communicate this truth (as part of a shared or reciprocal life), is to confer on others, as well as oneself, the greatest possible benefit. However, doing so is not ethically valuable *only* because it confers benefit on others, as it would be in a framework of thought centred on altruism.

To explain in more detail how this way of understanding the overall shape of Greek ethical theory constitutes an alternative to the interpretative approach of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, it is useful to take note of the broad distinction made earlier between two types of Greek ethical theory.⁸⁷ In Aristotle’s ethical theory, like that of Plato’s *Republic*, stress is laid both (1) on the idea that pre-reflective virtue is a precondition for post-reflective virtue and (2) on the idea that reflective reasoning can legitimately modify or reshape the normative beliefs embodied in pre-reflective virtue.⁸⁸ This pattern is at odds with the account of the role of ethical reflection in Aristotelian theory offered by Irwin (according to which understanding of oneself as a rational agent is crucial in creating the motivation for altruism) in two main ways. One is that the stress on the role of pre-reflective virtue as a precondition for valid ethical reflection conflicts with the ‘Archimedean’ function which he attributes, in effect, to the idea of rational self-realization.⁸⁹ As I argue later, the idea that we should realize ‘what each of us is’ is used, in *NE* 9. 4, 8, as a way of focusing an understanding of ourselves, and of ‘reasonableness’, that depends on the prior development of pre-reflective virtue.⁹⁰ Aristotle’s rather different way of using the idea of ‘what each of us is’ in *NE* 10. 7–8 is closer to the function which Irwin allocates to ethical reflection in that the content of the idea is based on reflection rather than on pre-reflective virtue. But the kind of content that Aristotle ascribes to this idea here (namely, contemplative or philosophical wisdom) is not compatible with the content which is

⁸⁷ See Introd. text to n. 59, explored in more detail in 4.6 above, text to nn. 179–225.

⁸⁸ See above 4.4, text to nn. 93–119; 4.6, text to nn. 180, 184, 189–225. In Pl. *R.*, a further stipulation is that the norms of pre-reflective virtue must be those determined by post-reflective ethical knowledge.

⁸⁹ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 24–33; and text to nn. 68–74 above.

⁹⁰ See 5.5 below, esp. text to nn. 176–96.

required by Irwin's account of 'self-realization', that is, practical reasoning directed at benefiting others.⁹¹

In offering this account of what 'each of us is' in NE 10. 7–8, like Plato in his presentation of the attitude of the philosopher-rulers to re-entering the cave, Aristotle shows his awareness of the tension between this account and the idea of 'reasonableness' embodied in pre-reflective virtue.⁹² But, as suggested in connection with the philosopher-rulers, the preference for the contemplative life is intelligible, as an ethical position, within the Greek framework of ethical thinking; and the characterization of this framework just offered helps to make plain how this is so. To determine what is (by the best available standards of ethical argument) the best possible human life and to communicate this to others is to confer on them, as well as on oneself, the greatest possible human benefit.⁹³ To do so is to extend in the deepest way the pursuit of shared or reciprocated benefit that is central to Greek thinking about the normative form of interpersonal ethics,⁹⁴ even if the idea thus expressed (that contemplation is the highest human good) does not correspond to the thinking which informs pre-reflective versions of the shared or reciprocated life.

I apply a similar type of interpretation to explain the position found in the mysteries of Plato's *Symposium* and Epicurean theory, which exemplifies the contrasting strand in Greek ethical thinking. Here, the stress falls not so much on the idea that reflection legitimately reshapes pre-reflective virtue, but rather that reflective reasoning legitimately sets the standards for interpersonal and communal participation.⁹⁵ In setting the standards for the shaping of one's own life and that of others, these theories can be seen as conferring the greatest possible benefit on others, as well as oneself, even if the ethical norms communicated do not correspond to those current in conventional Greek ethics. This pattern comes closer than does the other Greek pattern noted to attributing an 'Archimedean' role to reflection,⁹⁶ but the content of the ethical reflection in these

⁹¹ See 5.6 below; however, I also argue that Aristotle's use of this idea in 10. 7–8 is not 'Archimedean', see text to nn. 282–91 below.

⁹² See 5.6 below, text to nn. 255–62; and 4.6 above, text to nn. 226–9.

⁹³ See refs. in n. 9 above.

⁹⁴ See text to n. 86 above.

⁹⁵ See 4.6 above, text to nn. 186–8; 5.7 below, text to nn. 292–359, 362, esp. text to nn. 325–8.

⁹⁶ This is so in so far as pre-reflective virtue is not stipulated as a precondition for valid ethical reflection in the same way as in the other pattern (text to n. 88 above).

theories does not correspond to that proposed by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen.⁹⁷ Stoic theory, in some respects, comes closest to the pattern that these scholars have in view, in that reflection is taken to show that other-benefiting practical action (indeed, action which benefits *any* other) constitutes, at least, one aspect of the best possible human life.⁹⁸ But I suggest that Stoic theory should be taken as a modification or extension of the patterns of thinking found in other Greek theories, rather than a radical departure from these. Although the emphasis on generalized benefiting of others is striking, the general pattern of thinking about pre-reflective and post-reflective virtue is explicable as a variant of the two patterns noted elsewhere in Greek thinking, rather than corresponding to that presupposed by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen.⁹⁹

Although my aim, in exploring these issues, is partly to seek to clarify Greek philosophical thinking about ethical and psycho-ethical norms, considered both in themselves and in relation to those found in Greek poetic thinking,¹⁰⁰ it is also, and more fundamentally, to clarify the conception of the person expressed in Greek thinking. As suggested in Chapter 4, the interpretative approach of Irwin, like that of Engberg-Pedersen, is 'subjective-individualist' in analysing the central core of Greek ethical thinking in terms of the individual's reflection about the best possible form of 'self'-realization, even though the content of this reflection is conceived from an ethically objectivist rather than a subjectivist standpoint.¹⁰¹ In spite of other differences, all the Greek theories considered here conceive reflection rather as a mode of shared argument or debate about the best possible human life (a question which Aristotle characterizes in terms of the issue of 'what each of us is').¹⁰² Although the two strands of Greek thinking give a rather different account of the proper relationship between interactive and reflective (or dialectical) participation, all the theories conceive the process of ethical development as inhering, crucially, in this form rather than in that of individual

⁹⁷ See 5.7 below, esp. text to nn. 317–28, 339–49.

⁹⁸ But note the qualification to this point in text to n. 84 above.

⁹⁹ See below 5.5, text to nn. 213–33; 5.7, text to nn. 360–4.

¹⁰⁰ On the linkage between Greek poetic and philosophical norms, see 4.7 above, esp. text to nn. 268–78; also 5.7 below, text to nn. 263–74.

¹⁰¹ See 4.5 above, text to nn. 129–37.

¹⁰² Thus, Aristotle's use of this notion to represent his ethical norm should not be taken to signify any special focus on 'the self', as conceived in subjective-individualist terms; see 5.5 below, text to nn. 188–97.

reflection and its outcome.¹⁰³ The achievement of objective knowledge of ethical and psycho-ethical standards (such as 'what each of us is') is taken to depend on the right form and combination of these two types of participation. In this respect, the Greek theories embody an objective-participant (or rather objectivist-participant) conception of person, which can be defined by contrast with that implied in the interpretative approaches of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, which combine ethical objectivism with a special focus on the individual self or subject.¹⁰⁴

5.4 ARISTOTELIAN FRIENDSHIP AND NORMS OF INTERPERSONAL ETHICS

I now offer an account of key features of Aristotle's theory of friendship which draws on the framework of thinking about the norms of interpersonal relationships outlined in the previous section.¹⁰⁵ In the following two sections, I discuss the significance attached by Aristotle to the idea of 'what each of us is' in NE 9. 4, 8 and 10. 7–8, in the light of the patterns of thinking in Greek ethical theory also outlined.¹⁰⁶

In Aristotle's theory of friendship, I accept the view of Irwin and other recent scholars that we need to understand the relationship between certain key ideas. These are: (1) that friendship should include concern for the other 'for his sake', elaborated into the requirement that such concern be directed at what he is 'in himself'; (2) that a complete friendship involves treating the friend as 'a second self'; and (3) that such friendship is fully compatible with realizing 'what each of us is' (sometimes rendered as 'our real self').¹⁰⁷ I also think that it is clear that, as Irwin and others point out, in the case of the first two ideas, Aristotle is placing additional significance on existing features of conventional Greek thought; and that the third represents Aristotle's own philosophical framework (at least, his distinctive way of theorizing certain widely recognized features of friendship).¹⁰⁸ But I dispute, firstly, the claim that both

the conventional and Aristotelian versions of these ideas presuppose the egoism–altruism contrast; and, secondly, the claim that Aristotle's elaborations of the conventional ideas convey the thought that the deepest kind of self-realization is constituted by altruism.

Aristotle comments, several times, that it is a key characteristic of friendship that one 'wishes the friend well [good things]' (*boulesthait'agatha*) 'for his sake' (*ekeinou heneka*), 'not one's own', presenting this as a conventional idea.¹⁰⁹ Irwin takes this to be an expression of 'simple altruism' (by contrast with the 'metaphysical' type introduced by Aristotle), on the assumption, defended by Irwin elsewhere, that altruism is a central feature of conventional Greek ethical thinking.¹¹⁰ I have suggested already that, in general terms, this is a difficult thesis to maintain, if we have in mind the kind of models of altruism outlined in the previous section.¹¹¹ Aristotle's own comments also point to a different ethical framework for this idea. In citing the idea of wishing the other well 'for his sake', as a familiar one, Aristotle associates this with two further themes. One is, indeed, that of disinterested concern or affection, the key examples of which are presented as the attitudes of mother or father to a child.¹¹² But this is standardly coupled with a second and equally prominent theme, that of sharing one's life with another (for instance, sharing joys and pains, wishes, and objectives).¹¹³ As Aristotle himself notes, these two aspects of friendly well-wishing are not always combined.¹¹⁴ But, taken together, they represent a context in which other-concern intelligibly develops (though it does so in an ethical framework not centred on the egoism–altruism contrast). What Aristotle presupposes is the extension of concern from oneself to another that derives naturally from the close interconnections of a shared life, whether that of friends or family-members. The presentation of affectionate concern for one's children (not the

¹⁰⁹ Rh. 1380^b36–7; NE 1155^b31, 1166^a3–4, 1168^b1–3; EE 1240^a23–5.

¹¹⁰ Irwin (1988), 390–1, and (1986a), 127–8, referring to several passages in Arist. Rh. The centrality of the egoism–altruism contrast might seem to be supported by Aristotle's presentation of 'self-love' (*philautia*) as widely regarded as a vice: NE 9. 8, esp. 1168^a29–35, ^b15–23 (but see also n. 150 below).

¹¹¹ See 5.3 above, text to nn. 55–65, taken with nn. 51–2 above.

¹¹² NE 1166^a2–6; EE 1240^a23–8, 29–30; also Rh. 1381^b35–7. On the significance of the fact that this type of relationship is taken as a paradigm for such well-wishing, see text to n. 115 below.

¹¹³ NE 1166^a6–9; EE 1240^a28–30; Rh. 1381^a3–10, 28–35, ^b17–18.

¹¹⁴ Thus, e.g. (EE 1240^a29–30), '... fathers wish the existence of their sons [i.e. they wish them well for *their* sake] but live with [*σὺ* ὧσι] others'; see also ^a30–3.

¹⁰³ On these two strands in Greek thought, see refs. in n. 87 above.

¹⁰⁴ On this contrast in conceptions of person, see below 6.2, text to nn. 23–6; 6.7, text to nn. 233–8.

¹⁰⁵ See text to nn. 78–84 above.

¹⁰⁶ See text to nn. 85–102 above.

¹⁰⁷ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 27–35.

¹⁰⁸ On these moves in Aristotle's argument, see e.g. Price (1989), 104–5, 107–8.

desire to benefit *anyone*) as the paradigm of disinterested well-wishing matches this model.¹¹⁵ Also, as is clear from Aristotle's development of this model, this concern coexists with the thought that the familial or friendly relationship is conceived as being, normally and in principle, beneficial to both partners.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, Aristotle's subsequent claim that these conditions are most fully realized in a good person's relationship to *himself* (that is, within the life of *one* person) reinforces the idea that 'the shared life' is conceived as that in which 'we' become a communal 'I' rather than in which 'I' negate myself for the sake of 'the other', as in the models of altruism outlined earlier.¹¹⁷

The connection between the ethics of reciprocity (the other main strand in conventional thinking which Aristotle presumes) and the idea of wishing the other well 'for his sake' may seem less clear. However, in Homeric thinking, I have noted the importance of the idea that reciprocity, especially in its 'generalized' form, is properly expressed in acts of unforced generosity (what Claus calls 'gratuitous' gestures), not directed at producing a one-for-one return. This is so even though such acts are normally performed within a relationship which is conceived as being, in principle, reciprocally beneficial.¹¹⁸ Aristotle's chapter on friendship in the *Rhetoric* (2. 4), which takes well-wishing for the other's sake as criterial of friendship, also refers to an ethical pattern of this type. '[People feel friendly to] those who treat them well . . . or [do so] on a large scale or readily [*προθύμως*], or in special crises [*καιροῖς*], and [who do so] for their sake [*αὐτῶν ἕνεκα*]'.¹¹⁹ This idea can be taken together with the

¹¹⁵ Aristotle cites the example of mothers who hand over their children to others to be brought up 'and do not seek to be loved in return (if they cannot have both), but think it sufficient if they see the children doing well, and they themselves love them even if the children, because of their ignorance [of the facts], do not make the return due to a mother' (*μηδὲν ὧν μητρὶ προσήκει ἀπονέμωσι διὰ τὴν ἀγνοίαν*), *NE* 1159^a28–33. This attitude may be taken as a mark of *philia* (n. 112 above), though it is cited rather as an example of the delight (*χαίρουν*) taken in loving rather than being loved (1159^a23–8). But Aristotle clearly sees this as an extension of a paradigm in which the mother–child relationship *does* yield reciprocal benefit (see e.g. *E. Med* 1024–7, 1029–35, and 2.9 above, text to n. 257–9) rather than one in which disinterested and impartial altruism is the ethical norm (for the latter norm, see n. 53 above).

¹¹⁶ See e.g. *NE* 1156^b12–17, 1157^b33–6, and text to nn. 131–2 below.

¹¹⁷ See *EE* 1240^b3–37; *NE* 1166^a10–^b1; also *EE* 1240^a36–9: 'the friend wants not merely to feel pain together with his friend but to feel *the same* pain [*τὴν αὐτὴν λύπην*] . . . if possible, and, if not, as near as possible.' See also text to nn. 151–3 below.

¹¹⁸ See refs. in n. 78 above.

¹¹⁹ *Rh.* 1381^a11–13.

statement that a favourable attitude is generated by those who perform acts of favour (*charis*), especially when they do so 'without prior request' or 'undisclosed'; or 'towards someone who needs it, not in return for anything or for the advantage of the helper himself, but for the person helped'.¹²⁰ Taken in isolation, such comments may seem to indicate valuation of self-negating altruism of the type found in modern thinking.¹²¹ But it is apparent from *Rh.* 2. 4 as a whole that Aristotle presupposes an ethical framework in which mutual goodwill is generated by reciprocal acts and attitudes of well-wishing (directed specifically at friends, not at *anyone*). The passages singled out accentuate the commendation, as in Homer, of the performance of such reciprocal acts with an attitude of unforced generosity (this does not exclude the overall presumption that the relationship is, ideally, mutually beneficial).¹²²

A key move in Aristotle's argument is that of glossing, or modifying, conventional Greek thinking by claiming that perfect or complete (*teleia*) friendship is not just that in which the partners wish each other well for the sake of the other. It is, more precisely, that in which the partners wish each other well with respect to what they are 'in themselves' (*kath' hautous* or *di' hautous*), as distinct from what they are (incidentally), (*kata sumbebekos*), that is, their virtue as distinct from their being useful or pleasant.¹²³ Irwin, as noted, treats this move as signifying the conversion of 'simple' (conventional) altruism into 'metaphysical' altruism.¹²⁴ In the light of the Kantian model of altruism, summarized earlier, it is tempting to treat Aristotle's thesis as being that it is only in virtue-based friendship that people are treated non-instrumentally, as ends in themselves as distinct from means to our ends.¹²⁵ There has also been extensive

¹²⁰ *Rh.* 1381^b35–6, 1385^a18–19. On *charis* in Homer, see 2.7 above, text to nn. 140–6.

¹²¹ Zanker (1998), 79, interprets in this light the Aristotelian passages cited in n. 120 above, and Irwin (1986a), 127–8, so interprets comparable passages in *Rh.* 1. 9 and elsewhere.

¹²² Aristotle's distinction between 'ethical' (*ethike*) and 'legal' (*nomike*) types of utility-friendship presupposes (while also clarifying) conventional commendation of the type of friendly feeling which, while taking reciprocity as normal, does not demand one-for-one exchange: see *NE* 1162^b21–1163^a9, *EE* 1242^b31–1243^b14; and Price (1989), 155–7.

¹²³ See refs. in n. 31 above. The argument summarized here is that of *NE* 8. 2–4 (though the essence-incidental quality distinction also occurs in *EE* 7. 2, 1237^b1–6).

¹²⁴ Irwin (1988), 376–7, 390–1, 395–7, outlined in 5.2 above, text to nn. 27–33.

¹²⁵ Vlastos (1981), 33 n. 100, sees Aristotle as going part of the way towards recognizing the Kantian norm. Irwin (1977), 270–1 sees him as going further (see his

recent debate, stimulated largely by John Cooper, about the extent to which all three Aristotelian types of friendship (those based on usefulness and pleasure as well as virtue) meet the conventional condition of wishing the friend well for his sake. Although this debate has not been couched in specifically Kantian terms, scholars have not always distinguished clearly between the Kantian ideal of non-instrumentality and the Greek idea of wishing the friend well for his sake (whether the latter idea is taken in its conventional or its Aristotelian sense).¹²⁶ However, I think that, if this issue is raised explicitly, it is clear that Aristotle's distinctions are not identical with Kant's, and that they presuppose a different kind of ethical framework. Aristotle's modification of conventional ideas does not take the form of replacing the conventional criteria ('wishing the other good things for his sake') with morally stricter criteria (those of wishing him well for what he is 'in himself', understood in terms of strict non-instrumentality). The argument is rather that virtue-friendship, if properly understood, meets conventional criteria more fully, and in a deeper sense, than the other types of friendship. In a virtue-friendship, well-wishing is directed at what the friend is 'in himself', and so it meets more fully the condition of wishing him well for *his* sake (that is, for the sake of what he is *in himself* rather than in his incidental qualities).¹²⁷ Also, in a virtue-friendship, the partners are able properly to wish each other *good things* (*t'agatha*) because they are good absolutely (objectively) and are thus able to wish each other things that are absolutely, not relatively, good.¹²⁸ Thus, both these features of the conventional criteria of friendship are shown to be realized most fully by virtue-friendship.

Also, in arguing for the superiority of virtue-friendship to the other types, Aristotle identifies features which fit naturally into the conventional Greek ethical framework (as outlined here), rather than

criticisms of Vlastos' reservations in 342-4 n. 28), while distinguishing Aristotle's views from the 'broadly Kantian' (in my terms, 'subjective-individualist') version of this idea presupposed by Vlastos, 271-2.

¹²⁶ See e.g. Cooper's concern about whether or not a pleasure-friend or utility-friend will 'act in the interest of the other person's good, independent of considerations of their *own* welfare or pleasure' (1980, 311, his italics), and about how 'self-centered' they are (p. 336, n. 14). On Cooper's argument, see Price's careful analysis in (1989), 149-54.

¹²⁷ NE 1155^b31, 1156^a10-19, 1156^b8-11, 1157^a16-20, ^b1-5.

¹²⁸ NE 1156^b6-11, 19-23, 1157^b25-8, 31-6. This line of argument is central to the EE's theory of friendship: see 7. 2, esp. 1235^b30-1236^a15, 1236^b26-1237^b9; and see further Price (1989), 131-48.

into one centred on altruism. Aristotle stresses that friendship based on virtue has a permanence and stability not present in the other types, and that it thus enables a permanence, and completeness, of the 'shared life' (*suzen*) which constitutes the essence of friendship.¹²⁹ The placing of a positive value on 'shared life', and on the conditions that create it, is, in principle, compatible with some versions of altruism, though not those considered earlier.¹³⁰ What we find in Aristotle, however, is the combination of the idea of the shared life with a version of the ethics of reciprocity. Aristotle stresses, first of all, that in virtue-friendship we find most fully a further, widely recognized, feature of friendship, that is, reciprocation of well-wishing (*antiphileisis*, *antiphilia*) and 'reciprocal choice' (*antiprohaireisis*) of friends.¹³¹ This latter theme could, in theory, be combined with the valuation of altruism: the friendship would be conceived as providing the reciprocation of *altruism*. But Aristotle also includes elements which are not compatible with a framework centred on the idea of altruism. He stresses that virtue-friendships yield maximal benefit (more precisely, maximal reciprocation of benefit) to the partners, including that relating to usefulness and pleasure as well as to virtue: 'In loving a friend, people love their own good. When a good person becomes a friend, he becomes a good thing to his friend. Each of them, therefore, loves his own good, and pays back the same as he receives [*τὸ ἴσον ἀνταποδίδωσιν*] in well-wishing and pleasure.'¹³²

In NE 9. 8, one of three much-discussed chapters,¹³³ in which Aristotle takes up issues raised by his characterization of perfect friendship in 8. 3-5, he indicates both how near he comes to modern ideals of altruism and how far he is from these. He points out that the virtuous 'self-lover' (*philautos*) will surrender many good things to his friends, including his life and the chance of doing fine actions, in response to the demands inherent in the

¹²⁹ On permanence, see NE 1156^b11-12, 17-18, EE 1237^b9-16; on time as a necessary factor increasing the shared life of friendship, see NE 1156^b25-32, 1157^b20-2, EE 1237^b16-1238^a3. On the completeness of the shared life of virtue-friendship, see NE 9. 9, esp. 1170^b10-14, EE 1245^a18-^b9. See further Price (1989), 118-19, 146, 159-60; Sherman (1989), 132-6.

¹³⁰ On altruism within lasting relationships, see e.g. Williams (1981), 16-18 and Blum (1980), rather than the models outlined in 5.3 above, text to nn. 55-66 (which accentuate the idea of benefiting *anyone*).

¹³¹ NE 1155^b28, ^b34-1156^a5, 1156^b33-5; EE 1236^a14-15, 1236^b3-6, 1237^a30-6.

¹³² NE 1157^b33-6, also 1156^b12-17; EE 1236^b26-32, 1237^a26-30.

¹³³ NE 9. 4, 8, 9; the EE parallel discussions are 7. 6 (cf. NE 9. 8), 7. 12 (cf. NE 9. 9).

shared life of virtue-friendship. On the other hand, he claims that, in so doing, the person concerned 'allocates to himself the greater good' (*μεῖζον ἀγαθόν*), namely that of doing the fine thing (*kalon*) in performing these acts for his friend.¹³⁴ This passage, like the partly comparable picture of the magnanimous person (*megalopsuchos*) in NE 4. 3, is widely recognized as having a strongly Homeric ethos, and seems clearly informed by Homeric patterns of the ethics of reciprocity.¹³⁵ Aristotle presupposes, and incorporates in his framework of thinking, the Homeric idea that the benefactor gains ethical status by benefaction. Both Aristotelian discussions seem also to require some equivalent for the Homeric idea that fineness is displayed above all in a generous or 'gratuitous' gesture, one which is justified by the claims of the situation, but is not constrained by interpersonal or communal obligation.¹³⁶ The idea of a 'moral competition', which is implied in NE 9. 8, is found unacceptable by some modern commentators, and seems clearly incompatible with the ideal of altruism, as typically conceived in modern thought.¹³⁷ However, although moral competition is, obviously, a theme in this chapter,¹³⁸ the pattern presupposed in the passage cited may be rather that of reciprocal exchange within the shared life of virtue. The paradox, in this explicitly paradoxical passage, is that it is precisely in giving up so much to his friend that the person concerned comes out as the gainer (he gains the greater good of performing 'the fine', *kalon*).¹³⁹ Thus, although the actions and attitudes involved contain much that we should regard as 'altruism', they do so without requiring the negation of self (or of selfishness) in benefiting the other that is central to the models of altruism outlined earlier.

A further feature of NE 9. 8, as also of 9. 4, is the claim that the

¹³⁴ NE 1169^a28–9, taken in the context of ^a18–^b2. The passage presupposes the key Aristotelian ideas: (1) that virtue involves doing the fine thing for the sake of the fine (*tou kalou heneka*), see e.g. NE 1115^b12–13; and (2) that the life according to virtue is the highest human good (NE 1098^a7–18).

¹³⁵ On magnanimity, see NE 4. 3, esp. 1124^b6–26; also 4.7 above, n. 306.

¹³⁶ On the superior ethical status of the benefactor to the person benefited, see NE 1168^a9–12. On the Homeric background, see above 2.6, text to nn. 127–8, 134; 2.7, text to nn. 144–6, 156–7, 169–74, 182, esp. the last 2 refs.

¹³⁷ See e.g. Price (1989), 112–13. Kraut (1989), however, 115–25, argues that moral competition is compatible with his (generous) account of 'altruism' (on the latter see his 78–86 and n. 244 below). Annas (1993), 256–60, also sees it as compatible with the kind of valuation of 'other-concern' that she sees as central to Aristotle's theory.

¹³⁸ See e.g. NE 1168^b23–8, 1169^a6–11.

¹³⁹ See refs. in nn. 132, 134 above.

virtuous person's friendship serves to realize 'what each of us is',¹⁴⁰ a claim which is clearly cognate to that of 9. 9, that such friendship enhances the virtuous person's happiness. The contents of these chapters can plausibly be characterized as centring on the question of the relationship between 'self' and 'other', and of the nature of 'the self'. Thus, at this point, it may seem inescapable that we should define the argument in terms of the kind of self–other contrast that is, I suggested, implied in the egoism–altruism contrast.¹⁴¹ Indeed, the argument has often been interpreted in this way: it has been claimed either (1) that in these chapters Aristotle provides an egoistic analysis of (apparent) altruism; or (2) that he shows how the pursuit of one's own happiness is compatible with altruism; or (3) that he shows how altruism can be understood as the deepest kind of 'self'-realization.¹⁴² However, I think that the main thrust of these Aristotelian chapters, and the conception of 'the self' that they embody, can be defined better in terms of the alternative ethical framework offered here.¹⁴³ What, on my view, these chapters set out to provide (to those who are capable of recognizing this properly)¹⁴⁴ is a deeper (shared) understanding of the kind of mutual benefit provided by the shared life of virtue-friendship.¹⁴⁵ In 9. 8, the key point is that the 'self-lover' (*philautos*), in the best sense, is the one who loves the kind of 'self' (characterized as 'what each of us is') that enables him to live the shared life of virtuous friendship, and, in this way, as indicated earlier, to benefit himself as well as the friend.¹⁴⁶ In NE 9. 4 the point is rather that the virtuous person extends to his virtuous friend the same kind of concern, wishing him well for his sake, that he has for his (real) self, that is, the 'self' which directs his own virtuous life.¹⁴⁷ In 9. 9, the shared life of virtuous friends is

¹⁴⁰ See refs. in n. 28 above.

¹⁴¹ See 5.2 above, text to n. 53.

¹⁴² For these positions, see above, text to nn. 76, 34–6, and 23–33, respectively.

¹⁴³ Here, I follow what I see as being the chief emphasis of Sherman (1989), ch. 4, esp. 138–44; Price (1989), ch. 4, esp. 114–30. See also Annas (1993), 253–62, which, while distinct from the approach taken here, is also different from the positions referred to in n. 142 in not presupposing the relevance of the egoism–altruism contrast (see n. 85 above).

¹⁴⁴ On the significance of this qualification, see 5.5 below, text to nn. 164–73, 178–85, 193–7.

¹⁴⁵ For the latter idea, see text to n. 132 above.

¹⁴⁶ NE 1168^b28–1169^a11, esp. 1168^b35; see text to nn. 133–9 above, and, on the conception of 'self' involved, see 5.5 below.

¹⁴⁷ NE 1166^a10–29, esp. 16–17, 22–3; see also EE 1240^b11–30, but without reference to the idea of 'what each of us is'.

shown to enhance the happiness of each, in so far as each, by constituting a 'second self' for the other, extends his pleasurable awareness of his own virtue.¹⁴⁸ Thus, on my view, although these chapters analyse ideal friendship in terms of the self-other contrast, they do so in a way that presupposes the ethical centrality of the idea of the shared life, and that underlines the mutual benefit inhering in this kind of life.

The psycho-ethical norm implied in these chapters is one which can be correlated with the ethical framework outlined earlier.¹⁴⁹ What is envisaged is not so much the negation of selfish or egoistic desires,¹⁵⁰ combined with a commitment to benefit the other, but rather the whole-hearted engagement with the activities and norms embodied in the shared life of virtue-friendship. The pattern can be defined in terms of the ideal noted earlier, in which 'we' become a shared 'I', by contrast with the altruistic ideal, in which 'I' negate myself to benefit 'the other'.¹⁵¹ This ideal is especially prominent in *NE* 9. 9 and *EE* 7. 12, where it is expressed as the claim that the co-operative life of virtuous friends constitutes, in effect, *one* life, in which each partner can be as pleasurably aware of the other's life as his own, or perhaps even more so.¹⁵² Relevant here is Aristotle's view that, although virtuous people, as distinct individuals, have contingently different physical and psychological features, they are, essentially, the same in their psycho-ethical character. The shared life of virtue-friendship, of which dialogue forms a key part, constitutes the context for the promotion, as well as the expression, of this shared 'identity'.¹⁵³

The related chapters *NE* 9. 4 and *EE* 7. 6 presuppose this merging of the life of virtuous friends,¹⁵⁴ but focus rather on the idea that a

¹⁴⁸ *NE* 1169^b28–1170^b19; see also *EE* 1244^b23–1245^b19.

¹⁴⁹ 5.3 above, text to nn. 77–86.

¹⁵⁰ The criticism of (conventional) self-love (*philautia*) in *NE* 9. 8, 1168^a29–35, ^b15–23, might seem to suggest this; but this is coupled with praise of virtuous self-love, 1168^b25–1169^b2.

¹⁵¹ See 5.3 above, text to nn. 64–6; and contrast text to n. 117 above.

¹⁵² See esp. *NE* 1169^b30–1170^a7, 1170^b10–19; *EE* 1245^a35–^b11; *Magna Moralia* (*MM*) 1213^a16–24. See also Sherman (1989), 140–4; Price (1989), 118–19, 120–4.

¹⁵³ *EE* 1245^a31–5 and *NE* 1172^a10–15. Passages emphasizing shared psychological life (partly effected by dialogue) include: *NE* 1170^b11–12, 'the sharing of discourse [*logoi*] and thought [*dianoia*]'; *EE* 1244^b25–6, 'shared perception and shared knowledge [*τὸ συναίσθάνεσθαι καὶ τὸ συγγνωρίζειν*]'; 1245^a19–20, 22, 'with friends we share . . . philosophy [*κοινωνοῦμεν . . . φιλοσοφίας*]'; 1245^b4, 'contemplate together [*suntheorein*]': see also 5.6 below, text to nn. 249–50.

¹⁵⁴ e.g. *NE* 1166^a30–3; *EE* 1240^a36–^b11.

structural parallel exists between the interpersonal and intrapsychic life of such friends. The dominant thought here is that the shared life of virtue-friendship (in which 'we' become, in effect, a single 'I') also creates a context in which intrapsychic life is maximally unified (in which 'I' am unified most fully).¹⁵⁵ *NE* 9. 8 explores, in a related way, the idea of a structural parallel between the interpersonal and intrapsychic lives of virtue-friends. The claim here is that the kind of intrapsychic unity (virtuous self-love) envisaged in 9. 4 is fully compatible with maximal commitment to the demands of virtue-friendship, conceived in terms of the idea of the shared or reciprocated life.¹⁵⁶ Thus, I think that Aristotle's use of the idea of 'what each of us is' in *NE* 9. 4, 8 is explicable in the light of the alternative ethical framework which I have offered in 5.3, and does not have to be explained by reference to the kind of self-other contrast which is implied by a framework centred on altruism. The paradox explored in these chapters, that virtuous 'self'-realization (realization of 'what each of us is') involves the merging of our selfhood with another's, might seem very close to Parfit's claims about the negation of personal identity (as usually understood) as part of the process of developing rational altruism.¹⁵⁷ But, as explained shortly, Aristotle's arguments presuppose *neither* the special (Archimedean) significance attached by Parfit to the idea of personal identity *nor* Parfit's idea that the claims of altruism require the negation of the importance of personal identity.¹⁵⁸ The assumption, which can be paralleled in certain Platonic theories, is rather that (positive) 'self-realization' and maximal engagement in interpersonal and communal relationships are fully compatible in a way that is beneficial to both parties.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ *NE* 1166^a23–33, ^b2–29; *EE* 1240^b11–30.

¹⁵⁶ *NE* 1168^a28–^b10, referring to 9. 4, 1166^a34; see text to nn. 133–9 above.

¹⁵⁷ A connection of this general type is suggested, with qualifications, by Price in connection with Plato (see n. 303 below). On Irwin's, partly comparable, linkage of Parfit and Aristotle, see n. 165 below. On Parfit's theory, see 5.3 above, text to nn. 62–3, 66.

¹⁵⁸ See 5.5 below, esp. text to nn. 164–5, 204–8.

¹⁵⁹ See e.g. Pl. *Phdr.* refs. in n. 307 below; the idea of a structural parallel between intrapsychic and interpersonal (communal) unity (see text to nn. 155–6 above) is also fundamental to Pl. *R.*, e.g. 433b–435b, 441d–444b. See further 5.7 below, text to nn. 312–15.

5.5 'WHAT EACH OF US IS' IN NE 9. 4, 8

I move from the question of the ethical framework embodied in key themes of Aristotle's theory of ideal friendship (including use of the idea of 'what each of us is')¹⁶⁰ to that of the philosophical significance of this latter idea, as deployed in NE 9. 4, 8.¹⁶¹ Broadly speaking, I think that, in NE 9. 4, 8, this idea encapsulates the conception of virtuous 'reasonableness' embodied in interactive discourse, and that, in NE 10. 7–8, it represents the outcome of reflective debate about virtuous reasonableness among dispositionally and intellectually prepared participants. I also take it that both of these ideas represent different types, and degrees, of understanding of what a (shared) human life, at its best, involves.¹⁶²

My approach to this question can be defined, again, by contrast with Irwin's, as summarized earlier (5.2). For Irwin, the claims made in NE 9. 4 and 9. 8 articulate a central thesis of Aristotle's ethical writings: that the life of virtue (including altruistic, other-benefiting virtue) constitutes the most effective way of realizing the essential 'self' of any rational agent. The relevant claims are: (1) that the virtuous person, but not the defective one, is psychologically integrated and stable and thus capable of consistent self-love (9. 4); and (2) that the virtuous person's concern with the friend who constitutes her 'second self' constitutes a valid extension of this self-love (9. 8). Taken together, and in conjunction with other Aristotelian themes relating to the self, these claims express the kernel of Aristotle's strategy, as Irwin understands this; an appeal to any rational agent capable of reflecting on her life as a whole to see that she has good reason to be (altruistically) virtuous.¹⁶³ I suggested earlier that the strategy attributed to Aristotle by Irwin (and to the Stoics by Engberg-Pedersen) resembles a line of argument prominent in some recent post-Kantian and Utilitarian philosophical theories. In effect, Aristotle's characterization of virtuous rationality is interpreted as a 'fulcrum', or 'Archimedean' point, designed to persuade anyone (even an immoralist) that it is rational to be (altruistically) virtuous.¹⁶⁴ Aristotle's claims in 9. 4, 8 may be seen as playing a key role

¹⁶⁰ On the relevant themes, see 5.4 above, text to n. 107.

¹⁶¹ On the significance attached to this idea in NE 10. 7–8, see 5.6 below.

¹⁶² See 5.3 above, text to n. 86.

¹⁶³ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 24–33.

¹⁶⁴ See 5.3 above, text to nn. 67–75.

in this strategy by showing how an ethically neutral account of our selfhood ('what each of us is') can promote the idea that each of us has reason to be virtuous.¹⁶⁵

Irwin's presentation of Aristotle's ethical theory as designed to convince, in principle, *anyone* of the desirability of virtue runs counter, on the face of it, to certain clear and explicit statements by Aristotle. The thrust of these statements is that ethical reflection or debate ('the why' of ethical life) can only be effective if it is based on the development of natural goodness through dispositional training in appropriate interpersonal and communal practices ('the that').¹⁶⁶ Irwin notes, but discounts, these statements.¹⁶⁷ He disregards them because of his view that Aristotle's ethical writings contain a justification of the life of virtue which is based on a cogent nexus of philosophical argument (what he calls 'strong dialectic') which goes beyond mere theorization of conventional beliefs (what he calls 'pure dialectic').¹⁶⁸ I also accept that Aristotle thinks that philosophical debate can reshape rational ethical beliefs; indeed, in some ways, I think that the reshaping goes further than Irwin suggests.¹⁶⁹ But I think that, for Aristotle, as for Plato's *Republic*, this reshaping is only possible if it builds on a pre-existing set of 'reasonable' belief-based dispositions.¹⁷⁰ This is not to deny that Aristotle sees his ethical claims as, arguably, true for all human beings as such. But it is to suggest that his picture of human ethical psychology and development carries implications about the (limited) range of human beings to whom these claims are fully intelligible and effective in helping to shape ethical life.¹⁷¹

Also, if we look closely at the form of the argument in NE 9. 4, 8,

¹⁶⁵ This view is implicit in Irwin's comments on NE 9. 4, 1166^a14–20, in (1988), 379–81; and on 9. 8, 1168^b28–1169^a18 (and related passages) in 390–7. Irwin alludes to Parfit (1984), part 3, in connection with this theme: see (1988), 610–11 n. 11, taken with 377–9, and in the analogous treatment of Platonic thinking in (1995), 390 n. 24, taken with 306–13.

¹⁶⁶ See 4.4 above, text to nn. 112–14, taken with text to nn. 106–10. For the idea that full ethical development depends on the combination of nature (*phusis*), habituation (*ethos*), and (reflective) reasoning (*logos*), as a general feature of Greek thought, see Gill (1983b), 469–74, esp. 473.

¹⁶⁷ Irwin (1988), 347–9, esp. 348 and 601 n. 8, arguing against the contrary view of Aristotle's conception of the role of ethical theory maintained by Burnyeat (1980), 81, 90, which is shared by Williams (1985), 34.

¹⁶⁸ Irwin (1988), refs. in previous note; see also his 359–60, 387–8, 476–83.

¹⁶⁹ See 5.6 below, text to nn. 252–4, 277–89.

¹⁷⁰ See refs. in n. 166 above; also 5.6 below, text to nn. 255–60, 290–1.

¹⁷¹ See below 5.6, text to nn. 255–9; 6.5, text to nn. 98–100, 111–21.

there are reasons for doubting that the idea of realizing 'what each of us is' plays the Archimedean role that is implied in Irwin's interpretation. For one thing, although this idea figures, in each of the chapters, within arguments that are, in some respects, conceptually innovative, these arguments also presuppose that the audience brings to bear certain pre-existing ethical beliefs and attitudes. For another, there is no attempt to provide a separate, ethically neutral, analysis of the idea of 'self' (or, 'what each of us is'), detachable from the associated ethically laden arguments.¹⁷² On the latter point, it is instructive to contrast Aristotle's procedure with that of Parfit's *Reasons and Persons*, the latter representing (one version of) the Archimedean use of the concept of 'self' or 'person' that Irwin, in effect, attributes to Aristotle.¹⁷³

In NE 9. 4, the initial innovative claim is that the characteristics of proper friendship derive from, and are displayed most fully within, a person's relationship to himself.¹⁷⁴ This claim is then revised into the thesis that this is true only of the good person's relationship to himself. The two key characteristics of friendship are taken to be: (1) wishing the friend good things for the sake of the friend and (2) sharing the friend's life, as well as his choices and feelings. In the good person's relationship to himself, but not that of ethically inferior people, it is said that we can find intrapsychic analogues for these characteristics of good interpersonal relationships.¹⁷⁵ It is in connection with the former characteristic that Aristotle introduces the idea of 'what each of us is'. The good person, but not the inferior, wishes good things to himself for his own sake, that is, as specified earlier, for what he is 'in himself' (*kath' hauton*), here rendered as

¹⁷² Indeed, there is relatively little specification of the psychological capacities which Aristotle understands as constituting 'what each of us is' in NE 9. 4, 8 (in contrast to NE 10. 7–8); such specification needs to be supplied by implication from the associated (ethically laden) argument. See text to nn. 177, 189–9 below.

¹⁷³ See n. 165 above and text to nn. 204–5 below. I am not claiming either (1) that Irwin attributes explicitly an 'Archimedean' role to the idea of 'what each of us is' as deployed in NE 9. 4, 8, or (2) that he explicitly compares Aristotle and Parfit in this respect, but rather that the overall thrust of Irwin's interpretative approach, as summarized here, implies that Aristotle is using this idea in this way.

¹⁷⁴ NE 1166^a1–2. This is marked as innovative by the subsequent comment that the idea that there can be friendship with oneself is problematic and requires further examination (1166^a33–^b2, also EE 1240^a7–21).

¹⁷⁵ NE 1166^a2–29. 1166^a14–23 relate to characteristic (1) and ^a13–14, 23–9 to characteristic (2); but the two points are seen as related (see further 5.4 above, text to nn. 112–17).

'what each of us is' (or 'seems to be'), *ὅπερ ἕκαστος εἶναι δοκεῖ*.¹⁷⁶ The latter is said to be our capacity for reasoning and thought (*to dianoetikon* and *to nooun*). The relevant functions of this capacity are not defined explicitly. But, to judge from this context and some related passages, they seem to be, primarily, the kind of practical reasoning that is displayed in deliberation and decision, together with the kind of 'contemplative' reasoning that is exercised in pleasurable observation of one's own deliberate actions.¹⁷⁷

There are considerable difficulties in interpreting this line of thought as Archimedean in the way that Irwin's interpretation requires. There is no separate argument in support of the statement that our reasoning capacity is 'what each of us is'.¹⁷⁸ However, even if we allow that this statement is uncontroversial, and one that could be accepted by anyone, including a non-virtuous person or a moral sceptic, it is not clear why such people would, or should, also accept the claim that only the good person wishes himself good things for the sake of 'what each of us is', in this sense. Aristotle may be taken to be offering reasons for this claim later in the chapter, in his contrasting characterization of the attitude of ethically inferior people to themselves. This characterization seems to be focused mainly on the second mark of friendship (that of living a fully shared life) and designed to show that inferior people cannot live harmoniously with themselves.¹⁷⁹ But these comments may also convey the point that inferior people fail to wish themselves good things for the sake of 'what each of us is'. Such people fail, that is, to sustain a mode of psycho-ethical life in which they deploy their deliberative reasoning in a coherent and stable way, and thus fail to provide the basis for pleasurable contemplation of their own deliberate actions.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ NE 1166^a14–23, esp. 16–17, 22–3. On *kath' hauton*, see above 5.2, text to n. 27; 5.4, text to nn. 123–8.

¹⁷⁷ The virtues of thought or reasoning (*dianoia*) include practical wisdom (*phronesis*), displayed in deliberation and decision; the relevant capacity is identified as 'the leading part of oneself' at NE 1113^a5–7. Wishing and deliberative reasoning are clearly part of what is involved in 1166^a14–15, and in the contrasting inferior states in 1166^b6–11. 1166^a23–9 focuses on the intrapsychic cohesion of the good person, but, taken as continuing ^a14–23 (and ^a13–14), suggests especially the kind of thinking involved in 'acts of contemplation' (*theoremata*) of one's own good (deliberate) actions; for this idea, see 'contemplate', (*theorein*) in NE 9. 9, esp. 1169^b33 and 1170^a2.

¹⁷⁸ Contrast Parfit (1984), part 3, discussed in text to nn. 204–5 below.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. NE 1166^b7–26 with ^a6–9, 13–14, 23–9.

¹⁸⁰ The themes of failing to form consistent wishes for what they see as good, and thus failing (consistently) to regard these wishes and correlated actions with pleasure are prominent throughout 1166^b7–26; see further Irwin (1988), 379–81.

The claim that ethically bad, as well as weak-willed ('akratic'), people are psycho-ethically incoherent is, on the face of it, inconsistent with Aristotle's normal way of classifying ethical character-states.¹⁸¹ But, even if his claim can be rendered consistent with his own (ethically laden) system,¹⁸² it is quite unclear how the claim can be regarded as ethically neutral. It is unclear why the ethically bad, as well as the good, should accept this characterization of their state. Hence, it is difficult to see how this picture of the psycho-ethical state of inferior people can provide (neutral) support for the assertion that only good people wish themselves good things for the sake of 'what each of us is'. Thus, it is not clear how this latter assertion can be regarded as Archimedean, and as designed to show anyone that it is rational to be ethically good. A more plausible reading of the argument, and one which is more consistent with Aristotle's own presentation of the function of ethical debate, is this. The picture of the psycho-ethical state of inferior people provides, for those who are dispositionally and intellectually prepared to understand its significance, support and clarification of Aristotle's claim that only the good person is a friend to himself in the relevant ways.¹⁸³ That claim is not to be taken as Archimedean either as a whole, or in respect of the comment that our reasoning capacity is 'what each of us is'. Rather, it is to be taken as an innovative way of theorizing pre-existing ethical beliefs, highlighting parallels implied in those beliefs about the analogous structure of interpersonal and intrapsychic relationships.¹⁸⁴ It provides an analytic 'why' for those who already have both the 'that' and the capacity to understand the 'why'.¹⁸⁵

A similar account can be offered of the related line of argument in NE 9. 8. The initial controversial claim here is that one should be a 'self-lover' (*philautos*), in some sense. This claim is then qualified, or clarified, by distinguishing the conventional 'self-lover' (who allocates himself a large share of material goods, social status, and

¹⁸¹ See e.g. NE 1150^a16–23, ^b29–31, taken with Price (1989), 128.

¹⁸² For some suggestions, see Irwin (1985), 367–8, note on 1166^b6–25; Irwin (1988), 381–4. A further line of thought is advanced in EE 1240^b24–7, cf. NE 1166^b11–13; even the bad have some good in them which leads them subsequently to blame themselves (and sometimes kill themselves).

¹⁸³ For the relevant ways, see text to n. 175 above.

¹⁸⁴ See 5.4 above, text to n. 155 above.

¹⁸⁵ See text to n. 166 above.

bodily pleasures)¹⁸⁶ from the kind of 'self-lover' that Aristotle has in view. This is someone who competes, and allocates himself a larger share, in practising virtue, even though this may involve giving up the goods pursued by the conventional self-lover.¹⁸⁷ It is in connection with this type of self-lover that Aristotle introduces the idea of 'what each of us is'. The good self-lover loves and pleases 'what each of us is', that is, practical reasoning expressed in deliberate action.¹⁸⁸ But what, precisely, is Aristotle's point in characterizing these two kinds of self-lover in this way? Some of his comments might seem to suggest a rather simplistic duality, according to which the good self-lover follows her practical reasoning, *whatever this is*, and the bad self-lover follows her desires and feelings, *whatever these are*.¹⁸⁹ But such a claim would be wholly inconsistent with Aristotle's normal view that ethical virtue is a combination of 'true reasoning and right desire'.¹⁹⁰ Aristotle's point, more fully explicated, must be that the good self-lover loves the virtuous character (the combination of sound dispositions and practical reasoning) from which good action derives. In particular, she loves the practical reasoning that is 'the most controlling part' (*τὸ κυριώτατον*) of this character.¹⁹¹ The claim that this controlling part constitutes 'what each of us is' does not mean that 'each' one of us (human beings) displays the kind of

¹⁸⁶ On Aristotle's presumptions about (conventional) 'self-love', as not based on the egoistic-altruistic contrast, see 5.4 above, text to nn. 143–53, esp. n. 150.

¹⁸⁷ NE 1168^b15–19, 23–8, 1169^a3–^b2; see also 5.4 above, text to nn. 133–9.

¹⁸⁸ NE 1168^b28–1169^a3, esp. ^b34–5 (cited at the head of this chapter). The kind of *nous* ('mind') involved is that which shapes deliberate action, making one 'self-controlled' or 'akratic' (*enkrates* or *akrates*) and thus capable or not of performing just and moderate actions (1168^b25–6). See also refs. on practical reasoning in n. 177 above, esp. 1113^a5–7.

¹⁸⁹ NE 1168^b19–21: 'the greedy satisfy their desires and feelings and the non-rational part of the psyche'; 1169^a17–18 'every mind [*nous*] chooses what is best for itself, and the good person obeys his mind'; also (possibly) ^a5, the contrast between living 'according to reason' [*kata logon*] and 'according to feeling' [*kata pathos*]. In the light of this unqualified contrast, 1168^b34–5 might be taken to signify that the 'self-controlled' person (*enkrates*) is governed by his mind (*nous*), whatever its ethical quality.

¹⁹⁰ See above 1.3, text to nn. 138, also nn. 139–43; 4.2, text to nn. 20–31, esp. n. 28.

¹⁹¹ NE 1168^b30–1169^a3, taken with refs. in n. 188 above. Hence, the comments cited in n. 189 above must be taken as shorthand; e.g. the self-controlled (*enkrates*) person is ruled by *that* 'mind' (practical reasoning) in which 'true reasoning' is shaped by 'right desires' (sound dispositions), 1168^b34–5. In 1169^a5, the life 'according to feeling' (*kata pathos* not *logos*) is based on 'unreasonable' feelings or desires, as is implied in ^a6; see also the wicked person who follows *bad* (*phaulois*) feelings, ^a14–15. For the two senses of 'reason' involved, see 4.2 above, text to n. 37; for the type of shorthand involved, see 4.2, text to nn. 66–7.

practical reasoning that the good self-lover loves. Rather, the good self-lover loves human practical reasoning at its best, 'what each of us is', when we reach the highest possible standards of reasoning in combination with sound dispositions.¹⁹²

Irwin also emphasizes the point that the idea of 'what each of us is' signifies 'what is essential to us as human beings', not our identity as unique individuals, and that this 'essence' involves the development of stable dispositions as well as the (co-ordinated) use of practical reasoning.¹⁹³ But he does not accept what I see as the related point, that Aristotle's argument depends for its effectiveness on his audience's possessing, to some degree at least, the virtuous combination of disposition and reasoning which is characterized in this way.¹⁹⁴ Here and in *NE* 9. 4, Irwin sees the idea of 'what each of us is' as playing a key role in an Archimedean strategy, that of persuading *anyone* that she has good reason to be virtuous. However, as I see it, Aristotle is rather providing an analytic formulation (in terms of 'self-love' and 'what each of us is') for ethical ideals which are already taken to be part of his audience's framework of action-guiding beliefs.¹⁹⁵ The fact that, as indicated earlier, the psychological terms used ('mind', 'reason', 'desire', etc.) need to be interpreted in an ethically laden way to be properly intelligible confirms this point.¹⁹⁶ Also, the chapter closes with a picture of the extremely rigorous demands which friendship may involve (*NE* 1169^a18–^b2). There is a paradox, which Aristotle underlines, in the idea that this mode of interpersonal relationship (involving the surrender of what are usually considered 'goods') can be considered to confer a type of 'gain' or benefit to the person concerned, and, relatedly, to constitute a mode of 'self'-love.¹⁹⁷ The full appreciation of this paradox requires the prior development of the kind of belief-based dispositions that make it credible to see such behaviour as the realization of 'what each of us is'. In other words, I see the develop-

¹⁹² Thus, Aristotle's idea is not that of a 'self' which is identical with what each (individual) one of us is but rather what is essential (*kath' hauton*) to us as human beings, i.e. 'rationality', signifying normatively 'reasonable' reasoning.

¹⁹³ Irwin (1988), 376–9; also Price (1989), 105–10, 114–15, the latter passage highlighting the contrast with modern 'individualist' conceptions of 'self'.

¹⁹⁴ See text to nn. 166–71 above.

¹⁹⁵ As noted in text to nn. 192–3 above, on the kind of analytic formulation involved (i.e. one centred on human nature and not the idea of unique individuals), Irwin's view is closer to mine.

¹⁹⁶ See n. 191 above, and refs., esp. 1169^a5, 14–15.

¹⁹⁷ On the ethical ideal involved, see 5.4 above, text to nn. 134–9.

ment of these dispositions as a prerequisite for understanding the idea ('what each of us is') rather than seeing the idea as separately intelligible, and as Archimedean in producing the desire to develop these dispositions.

My view of Aristotle's use of the idea of 'what each of us is' can be restated in terms of the image of 'the self in dialogue', offered as a way of formulating the objective-participant concept of person.¹⁹⁸ Aristotle's ethical writings belong to the third type or level of dialogue (reflective debate about the proper goals of a human life). As such, they present a psycho-ethical model of what it means to be (normatively) 'human', in the full sense, centred on the ideal of being 'reason-ruled', or 'reasonable'. The ideas of wishing oneself well for the sake of 'what each of us is', and of loving 'what each of us is', belong to this type of reflective discourse.¹⁹⁹ But the full intelligibility, and credibility, of these ideas (and their effectiveness in helping to improve ethical life by understanding it)²⁰⁰ depend on the pre-existing recognition of the interpersonal and intrapsychic norms characterized in this way.²⁰¹ The effectiveness of true reflective discourse depends on the fact that the motivational patterns of the audience (conceived as interplay or dialogue within the psyche)²⁰² have been shaped by action-guiding interpersonal and communal discourse so as to enable them to recognize, and respond to, the psycho-ethical norms theorized in this way. As indicated already, Aristotle's theorization of these norms in these chapters is, to some extent, conceptually innovative, and, in *NE* 10. 7–8, there is a more substantial attempt to revise conventional norms. But, in that context too, I think that the effectiveness of the reflective debate depends, crucially, on the prior shaping of ethical motivation by interactive discourse.²⁰³

Aristotle's procedure, as I interpret this, can be characterized by

¹⁹⁸ See e.g. *Introd.*, text to nn. 39–44.

¹⁹⁹ See also, e.g., *NE* 1. 7, 13; 2. 4–6; 3. 3; 6. 5, 7, 9, 11–13; 10. 7–8. Thus far, I agree with Irwin (1988), chs. 16–18.

²⁰⁰ On this role of reflective discourse, see e.g. *NE* 1103^b26–9, 1179^a35–^b10; and see further 5.6 below.

²⁰¹ See text to nn. 179–80, 197 above.

²⁰² Here, as elsewhere in Greek philosophical psychology, psycho-ethical states are characterized typically as modes of interplay (sometimes specifically as 'dialogue'), and ones which are interconnected with the two other types of discourse involved. See e.g. *NE* 9. 4, 1166^a13–19, 23–7, 1166^b7–25; 9. 8, 1168^b29–1169^a2. See also 4.2 above, text to nn. 38–47, 53–6; 5.7 below, text to nn. 312–20.

²⁰³ See 5.6 below, text to nn. 254–9, 290–2.

contrast with Parfit's, summarized earlier.²⁰⁴ Parfit, like some other contemporary thinkers, assumes, on the one hand, that the nature of 'personal identity' can be defined in a way that is not ethically laden and, on the other, that the definition adopted carries substantive ethical implications for the way in which those who count as 'persons' should live and treat each other. He offers arguments which are designed to revise the conception of personal identity, as unitary and as fundamental to our metaphysical being, which he sees as prevalent in modern Western thought. These arguments are not presented as being as specifically ethical in character, but rather as appropriate to the (distinct and determinate) topic of personal identity, or 'selfhood', in this sense. However, Parfit believes that his definition, if accepted, carries with it deep implications for the way in which we frame ethical arguments and for the practical outcome of ethical deliberation.²⁰⁵ Aristotle's conception of 'what each of us is' in *NE* 9. 4, 8, and the picture of ethical life associated with this, is not strongly revisionary, and this is one obvious point of difference from Parfit. However, the difference that I am concerned with here is rather this. Aristotle does not, in my view, present the idea of 'what each of us is' as one that can be specified without reference to the ethical beliefs of his audience, and, specifically, to the norm of virtuous rationality or 'reasonableness' embodied in those beliefs.²⁰⁶ Thus it seems implausible to treat Aristotle's account of 'what each of us is' as Archimedean, either with a view to revising ethical beliefs in a radical way (as Parfit seeks to) or with a view to persuading any rational agent that she has reason to be ethically good. Since, as suggested earlier, Parfit's type of theory seems to inform Irwin's account of Aristotle's approach,²⁰⁷ this difference between Aristotle (in these chapters at least)²⁰⁸ and Parfit carries significant implications for the larger interpretative point which is at issue here.

The interpretative point at issue, and the significance of this for my larger enquiry into conceptions of the person, can be brought out further by referring to Engberg-Pedersen's analysis of the Stoic theory of human ethical development (*oikeiosis*), summarized

²⁰⁴ 5.3 above, text to nn. 62–3, 66.

²⁰⁵ On contemporary debate about personhood and personal identity, and about the ethical implications of definitions of 'person', see 6.2–4 below, esp. 6.4.

²⁰⁶ See refs. in nn. 201, 203 above.

²⁰⁷ See text to nn. 164–5 above, taken with n. 173.

²⁰⁸ On *NE* 10. 7–8 and 'Archimedean' arguments, see 5.6 below, esp. text to 290–1.

earlier.²⁰⁹ Engberg-Pedersen's account gives a pivotal role to the understanding of 'the self' in two key respects. First, he presents the realization that one's 'self' (as individual 'I' or subject) is, fundamentally, rational as a crucial stage in the development of virtue, and one that prepares the way for the extension of care to (in principle) any other self-conscious rational agent. Second, he presents the Stoic theory as, in effect, an (Archimedean) argument designed to persuade any rational agent that becoming ethically good (taken to include the development of altruism) is the most effective means of full self-realization.²¹⁰ Although there are certain important differences between the interpretative frameworks applied by Irwin and by Engberg-Pedersen,²¹¹ on the latter point, Engberg-Pedersen comes close to Irwin's analysis of Aristotle's use of the idea of 'what each of us is' in *NE* 9. 4, 8. Both scholars seem, in this respect, to ascribe to the Greek theories an Archimedean use of the idea of 'the self', in some sense, which assimilates the procedures of these theories to that of contemporary theories such as Parfit's.²¹²

Although I do not offer a full-scale alternative here to Engberg-Pedersen's account of Stoic theory, I note some problems in his account and outline features of an alternative reading. An obvious difficulty for Engberg-Pedersen's approach is that the idea of 'self-consciousness' is stressed most strongly, in the ancient source on which he relies principally, at the initial stages of human development.²¹³ What is indicated here, it seems clear, is a type of primitive awareness of, and attachment to, one's psycho-physical constitution, and one which is shared by human and non-human animals.²¹⁴ Even if this stage is described, in Cicero and in other sources, as a kind of 'self-awareness' or 'self-perception',²¹⁵ there are considerable

²⁰⁹ 5.2 above, text to nn. 44–50.

²¹⁰ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 47–9, and 50, respectively.

²¹¹ Broadly speaking, Irwin (1988), chs. 15–18, offers what Engberg-Pedersen (1990b), 32–5 would call a 'teleological' reading of the Greek theory, by contrast with the more 'subjective' reading offered by Engberg-Pedersen. However (1), Engberg-Pedersen sees the 'subjective' dimension as much more strongly marked in Stoic than in Aristotelian theory, and (2) Irwin gives a substantive role, within his 'teleological' reading of Aristotle, to the idea of 'self-realization'.

²¹² See 5.3 above, text to nn. 68–74.

²¹³ See Cic. *Fin.* 3. 16: self-consciousness (*sensus sui*) generates self-love (*diligere se* or *sibi conciliari*). For parallel ancient accounts, see DL 7. 85, Seneca, *Epistulae Morales* (*Ep.*) 121. 5–13, LS 57C (Hierocles).

²¹⁴ This point is emphasized by Wright (1991), 124–6 (notes on Cic. *Fin.* 3. 16).

²¹⁵ This is esp. so in Hierocles' version (e.g. LS 57C): see further Pembroke (1971), 118–20; Inwood (1984), 155–78; Long (1991), 105–9.

difficulties in characterizing this stage as the emergence of a quasi-Cartesian consciousness of oneself as 'I' or subject, as Engberg-Pedersen does.²¹⁶ A related difficulty arises in connection with the second main stage, that in which the human being develops the kind of rationality that is expressed in recognizing that virtue is the only good, and that, in comparison with this, the 'primary natural goods' are 'matters of indifference'.²¹⁷ Engberg-Pedersen presents this stage as an extension of the kind of self-consciousness (and self-love) established at the first stage. In his account, the realization that it is *oneself* (the individual 'I' or subject) that is rational, and hence liable to universal laws, plays a crucial role in developing properly moral motivation (the realization of the absolute priority of value). As Engberg-Pedersen puts it, the Stoic account thus combines two features sometimes seen as separate in modern philosophy: a sense of oneself as an 'I' or individual subject and a sense of oneself as (qua rational) subordinate to objective, general moral principles.²¹⁸

The principal difficulty with this line of interpretation is that in this second stage, unlike the earlier and more elementary one, there is little to support the claim that self-consciousness (understood by Engberg-Pedersen as consciousness of oneself as an individual 'I') figures as a central idea in the theory.²¹⁹ This reflects a more general problem: that in the relevant Ciceronian text (*Fin.* 3. 20–1) the psycho-ethical process by which the priority of virtue is realized is described in a highly compressed form, which requires some type of explanatory elaboration. This elaboration is provided by Engberg-Pedersen in terms of the development of self-consciousness. An alternative mode of elaboration would be to take account of a parallel account in *On Duties* (*De Officiis*), in which Cicero brings together the following features, as distinctively human functions: the capacity for reasoning, the use of language, sociability (in communal and

²¹⁶ See refs. in n. 47 above; Engberg-Pedersen (1990b), 71, anticipates, and seeks to meet, the charge of over-interpretation in the light of a modern (Cartesian) model of the 'I' as the locus of self-consciousness. For a contrasting reading of this text and its analogues (n. 213 above) which is *not* couched in terms of the emergence of the 'I', see Brunschwig (1986), 128–44.

²¹⁷ Cic. *Fin.* 3. 20–2 (= LS 59D, 64F), taken with *Fin.* 3. 52–9, Sen. *Ep.* 92. 11–13.

²¹⁸ Engberg-Pedersen (1990a) esp. 122–3, and 127–35; also refs in n. 48 above; see further 6.2 below, text to nn. 20–2.

²¹⁹ Engberg-Pedersen relies on the idea, which may be implicit in Cic. *Fin.* 3. 20–1, that the process involves reflection on one's own earlier (pre-moral or nascently moral actions) and sees in them *homologia* ('conformity') or *ordo* ('harmony') *rerum agendarum* ('in actions'). See esp. Engberg-Pedersen (1990b), 85–8.

familial life), the search for truth, and the recognition of order and rationality in nature. These are presented as the elements from which ethical goodness (*honestum*) arises.²²⁰ If these two passages are taken together, they allow the following line of thought. This crucial stage in ethical development can be understood as the product of engaging in human 'discourse', in a number of (inter-related) senses, including the action-guiding discourse associated with social engagement.²²¹ Learning to perform the 'appropriate acts' (*kathekonta*)²²² that are correlated with such engagement (in the right kind of social context)²²³ play a crucial role in preparing for the recognition of the absolute priority of virtue. The pre-reflective understanding of 'the order and . . . harmony of actions' (*rerum agendarum ordinem et . . . concordiam*), which is part of this stage, may also be seen as a precondition for the recognition of the 'order and harmony' of the universe, which the Stoics see as a key element in the kind of post-reflective understanding of which human beings alone are capable.²²⁴ Although this line of thought would need to be developed further to be fully credible, I think that, even when merely sketched, it clearly represents an alternative (and, arguably, more plausible) way of understanding the second stage to that proposed by Engberg-Pedersen. It also represents an objective-participant way of analysing this stage, by contrast with Engberg-Pedersen's, which is subjective-individualist in the focus placed on the individual's conception of her 'self' (though it is 'objectivist' in the conception of the process of ethical development involved).²²⁵

Related points can be made about Engberg-Pedersen's account of the third stage, in which human beings move from caring for 'their

²²⁰ *De officiis* (*Off.*) 1. 11–14; for *honestum*, cf. *Off.* 1. 14 and *Fin.* 3. 21. I am grateful to Miriam Griffin for pointing out to me this possible connection between *Off.* and *Fin.*

²²¹ See further Wright (1991), 131–3, esp. nn. 75 and 83; on the linkage between the development of language-use, reasoning, and ethical development, see Inwood (1985), 72–91.

²²² On *kathekonta* (sometimes defined by social roles) as a means towards, but not identical with, the normative wise person's practice of perfectly right acts (*katorthomata*), see LS 59E(2), G, Q, and LS vol. 1, 364–8, taken with Kidd (1971), 160–8.

²²³ On Stoic debate about what context meets this requirement, see 5.7 below, text to nn. 360–4.

²²⁴ See Cic. *Fin.* 3. 21, taken with LS 54H, N, 63E(5–6). See N. P. White (1979), 156–9, 166–70, 177–8; see also below 6.5, text to nn. 125–6; 6.7, text to n. 233; Gill (1990c), 143–8.

²²⁵ On this point, see text to nn. 231–7 below.

own' (*oikeioi*), particularly their children, to caring, in principle, for any human being. For Engberg-Pedersen, this stage is explained as a development of the first two, whereby concern is extended to all rational beings who (as rational) share the core element in one's own identity.²²⁶ One problem with this view, which Engberg-Pedersen acknowledges, is that Cicero does not provide explicit support for the idea that shared rationality does play the crucial role in extending concern.²²⁷ However, even if it does play this role, it is far from clear that it does so in a way that is linked with the themes of self-consciousness and self-love, in the way that Engberg-Pedersen suggests. His attempt to link up all three stages in this way runs counter to what seems to be a central feature of the Stoic (as distinct from the Aristotelian) position, namely that there are two distinct strands in *oikeiosis*, one derived from self-love, the other from love of others, primarily, one's children.²²⁸ The explicit emphasis in Cicero's presentation of the third stage falls on the extension outwards of conventional forms of familial and political association, rather than the extension of self-love and self-consciousness.²²⁹ Thus, if there is a direct connection between the third stage and the previous two, it may more plausibly be seen as centring on the connections between human associativeness, reasoning, and the virtues, which may have been central to the second stage, and which recur in more generalized form in the third stage.²³⁰

I think that these points, taken together, raise doubts about Engberg-Pedersen's claim that the Stoic theory of human development constitutes what is, in effect, an Archimedean argument, designed to convince any rational agent that she has good reason to become ethically good. His claim, more precisely, is that the markedly 'subjective' character of the Stoic account (the fact that this is couched in terms of developing understanding of the 'self') is bound up with their attempt to show, 'from the inside', as it were,

²²⁶ See Cic. *Fin.* 3. 62–8 (for selections, see LS 57F); and Engberg-Pedersen refs. in n. 49 above.

²²⁷ Engberg-Pedersen (1983), 176, (1990b), 125.

²²⁸ On these two strands, see LS 57D(1), E. for this point, see Annas (1993), 275–6; also 277–9, contrasting the linkage of these two strands in post-Aristotelian thought, which develops Aristotle's own linkage (254–61).

²²⁹ See Cic. *Fin.* 3. 62–8; see further Wright (1991), 172–7, esp. nn. 259, 272–3, also Blundell (1990). Hierocles' programme of contracting the normal circles of relationship (LS 57G) presupposes the same idea. See also n. 363 below.

²³⁰ See text to nn. 220–4 above; Schofield (1991), ch. 3 (on the 'city of gods and men', in Cic. *Fin.* 3. 64).

what psycho-ethical development involves.²³¹ In fact, there are problems in claiming that the Stoic theory, as presented by Cicero, at least, constitutes an *argument* for the Stoic conception of human happiness. On the face of it, it constitutes, rather, an account of the process of development by which someone completes the programme of development towards full human happiness, as the Stoics conceive this.²³² But, in so far as the account contains, by implication, a commendation of the relevant conception of human happiness, it is one which seems to presuppose, for its full intelligibility, some degree of progress in the development presented.²³³ On the interpretation sketched here, this progress consists in the development of virtue and rationality within (in the first instance, at least) familial and communal relationships, rather than of the progressive extension of consciousness of oneself as a (rational) individual, as Engberg-Pedersen suggests.

Although there are some significant differences between the theoretical frameworks applied by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen to these two Greek theories,²³⁴ both scholars ascribe an Archimedean role to the idea of 'self', seeing it as designed to lead any rational agent to recognize the value of altruistic virtue as a mode of 'self'-realization. In both cases, this feature of their accounts is associated with a lack of emphasis on what I am calling the 'participant' dimension of the Greek theories, notably as regards the ethical role of engagement in the action-guiding discourse of interpersonal and communal relationships.²³⁵ In the case of Engberg-Pedersen, and, to a lesser extent, Irwin (1988), there is comparable de-emphasizing of the 'participant' role in shared reflective debate (building on participation in interactive discourse).²³⁶ I suggested earlier that the

²³¹ Engberg-Pedersen (1990b), 42–4, 72, expanding (1983), 158.

²³² See Striker (1983), 158–61; Engberg-Pedersen (1983), 158, concedes that, if there is an argument to this effect, it is present only by implication. See further Gill (1990b), 146–7.

²³³ In other words, the Stoics, though less explicitly than Aristotle, seem to presuppose that an understanding of 'the why' presupposes a grasp of 'the that'; see text to n. 166 above, and 4.6, text to nn. 181–3.

²³⁴ See n. 211 above and n. 236 below.

²³⁵ See text to nn. 166–71, 181–5, 193–7, 219–25 above; for similar comments on Irwin (1977), see 4.3 above, text to nn. 75–83.

²³⁶ The role of 'strong dialectic' (Irwin (1988), 476–80) in revising conventional beliefs in ethics and psychology (chs. 13–18) is not conceived in terms of individual deliberation, as is the role of dialectic in Pl. *R.* (on which see Irwin (1977), 223–6, 233–48, and 4.5 above, text to nn. 122–37). However, there is no stress in Irwin (1988) on the idea of strong dialectic as shared debate, or as grounded in dispositional education

tendency to use the idea of 'self' or 'person' in an Archimedean way in modern theory could be seen as an extension of the Kantian move of grounding moral theory on the idea of the (individual) rational agent. Both Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen indicate, more or less explicitly, their view that these modern lines of thought are potentially relevant to understanding Greek thought. In both cases, especially that of Engberg-Pedersen, the tendency to analyse ethical development and ethical argument in terms of the individual, especially those of the individual's relationship to (or consciousness of) her 'self', can plausibly be connected with the informing influence of these modern conceptual models.²³⁷ In this respect, their interpretative approaches can be seen as expressing a subjective-individualist conception of the person, by contrast with the objective-participant one adopted here, although this is combined (as it is in Irwin's reading of the *Republic*), with ethical objectivism.

5.6 'WHAT EACH OF US IS' IN NE 10. 7-8

In NE 10. 7-8, Aristotle restates his claim that our mind (*nous*) is 'what each of us is', but here he identifies the capacity of the mind to engage in theoretical contemplation (*theoria*), as distinct from the practical reasoning that is associated with ethical virtue. The former capacity is presented as the 'divine' one, by contrast with the latter, which is more 'human': but the former represents a type of 'divinity', towards which we should aspire, as far as is humanly possible.²³⁸ In considering the significance of this move for my enquiry, I seek to place this move in the appropriate framework of thinking about interpersonal ethics and the function of ethical theory. Subsequently (6.5 below), I re-examine this move, together with a related one in NE 1. 7, as part of a comparison of Greek philosophical thinking about normative concepts and modern thinking about personhood. In both contexts, my underlying aim is to bring

through (correct) communal participation; see text to nn. 166-71 above. On the ethical objectivism that forms part of these scholars' interpretative approach, see, on Irwin, 4.5 above, text to nn. 122-37; on Engberg-Pedersen, 6.2 below, text to nn. 20-4.

²³⁷ See 5.3 above, text to n. 74.

²³⁸ NE 1178^a2-3, taken as part of 1177^b31-1178^a22 (see partial quotation at head of chapter); also 1177^a12-18, 1178^b7-23, 1179^a22-32.

out the conception of the person that is expressed in the relevant type of philosophical theory.

Aristotle's characterization of the capacity for theoretical contemplation as 'what each of us is' in NE 10. 7-8, unlike that in 9. 4, 8, is not plausibly taken as expressing the conception of 'reasonableness' associated with pre-reflective virtue; rather, it represents a post-theoretical revision of this conception. In allocating a substantive role to ethical theory, Aristotle may seem here to be making a move which lends itself to interpretation along the lines proposed by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen. However, I suggest that Aristotle's move differs from that which is central to their interpretative model in two principal ways. One is that Aristotle's argument in NE 10. 7-8, while innovative, is not 'Archimedean' (designed to persuade *any* rational agent that she has reason to be ethically good) in its use of the idea of 'what each of us is', in the way that their interpretative approach requires. Rather, Aristotle's innovation presupposes (and engages in reflective debate with) an audience which already possesses the kind of pre-reflective virtuous understanding of 'what each of us is' that is articulated in NE 9. 4, 8. In this respect, Aristotle's argument displays the pattern of thinking also found in Plato's *Republic*, in which ethical reflection is seen *both* as necessarily grounded in pre-reflective virtue *and* as capable of transforming the understanding of what virtue, at its deepest, involves.

Aristotle's move also differs from that which is central to the interpretative model of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen in its thinking about interpersonal ethics and the role of ethical theory. Aristotle's argument does not issue in the claim that altruism constitutes the deepest kind of self-realization. Indeed, Aristotle does not, in NE 10. 7-8 (as distinct from 9. 4, 8) characterize as 'what each of us is' the kind of psychological capacities (the combination of ethical virtue and practical wisdom) that are, within the conventional ethical framework which Aristotle is assuming, most obviously associated with other-benefiting (as well as self-benefiting) actions. However, Aristotle's move makes sense within the pattern of thinking outlined earlier, in which a key function of reflective reasoning is to extend shared understanding of what a human life, at its best, involves. Thus, *communicating* the ultimate preferability of theoretical wisdom constitutes the deepest way to benefit others by enabling them to share with oneself the best available human life. This pattern of thinking also helps us to make sense of certain partly parallel moves

in other Greek theories considered in the next section; and, as explained later, both types of move help us to see how Greek ethical thinking expresses the conception of person that I am calling 'objective-participant'.²³⁹

The question whether Aristotle's emphatic preference in 10. 7–8 of contemplative wisdom over practical wisdom combined with virtuous character is consistent with the ethical framework, and the conception of happiness, embodied in *NE* as a whole is intensely controversial. Some scholars regard Aristotle's presentation of contemplation as the 'dominant' element in human happiness as incompatible with the 'inclusive' conception of happiness (combining practical and contemplative wisdom) allegedly implied elsewhere in *NE*, and as devaluing the practical-cum-ethical dimension of virtue which is the main topic of much of *NE* (including 9. 4, 8).²⁴⁰ Other scholars argue, by contrast, that the claim in *NE* 10. 7–8 is consistent both with the overall structure of *NE* (notably with Book 6) and with Aristotle's thinking in other branches of philosophy about the interplay between the 'divine' and 'human' functions of human nature.²⁴¹ It is the latter approach that I follow here, although (like Jonathan Lear) I see Aristotle's argument in *NE* 10. 7–8 as acknowledging fully the competing claims of contemplative and practical wisdom, that is, the claims that give rise to the 'inclusive' reading of Aristotle's conception of happiness.²⁴² However, I also see Aristotle as offering, by implication at least, a (complex) resolution of these competing claims, and one that can be defined by referring to certain parallels in Platonic and Epicurean theory.

One of the factors that has created unease about Aristotle's preference for contemplative over practical wisdom in 10. 7–8 is that this preference runs counter to what *we*, from an ethical standpoint that gives a key place to altruism, see as being justifiable. It

²³⁹ See further above 5.1, text to n. 9; 5.3, text to nn. 86–104; below 5.7, text to nn. 325–8, 345–55, 365–7; 6.5, text to nn. 113–37; 6.7, text to nn. 213–35.

²⁴⁰ For reviews of the debate between proponents of the 'inclusive' and 'dominant' interpretations, see Kraut (1989), 7–9 and ch. 5; Kenny (1992), 4–42, 86–93. Key relevant texts are *NE* 1097^b14–20 and 1098^a16–18. Kenny reads *EE* as containing an 'inclusive' conception of happiness (1992), 93–102; but, for a 'dominant' reading of the crucial passage, *EE* 8. 3, 1249^b6–25, see Woods (1992), 180–4.

²⁴¹ e.g. Kraut (1989) focuses on the place of 10. 7–8 in *NE* as a whole, Lear (1988) (esp. chs. 1, 4, and 6.8) on Aristotle's thinking about the (human-divine) complexity of human nature in his philosophy as a whole. On the question whether *NE* can be treated as a unified work at all, see text to n. 277 below.

²⁴² Lear (1988), 9–11, 311–20; see text to nn. 260–73 below.

is the second-class 'human' life that centres on our performing 'just, brave, and other virtuous actions towards each other' (*NE* 1178^a10–11); and, by contrast with this, the preference for a life centred on contemplation may seem selfish or egoistic. In this connection, Richard Kraut's (1989) study is of particular interest. Like Irwin, Kraut believes that the egoism-altruism contrast is appropriately applied in interpreting Aristotle's ethical theory. But, unlike Irwin (1988), who strikingly ignores 10. 7–8,²⁴³ Kraut claims that Aristotle's position in these chapters need not be seen as egoistic or as incompatible with a (broadly) altruistic ethical framework.²⁴⁴ Kraut argues that Aristotle's preference for contemplative over practical wisdom in 10. 7–8, though clear and unequivocal, does not involve the devaluation of practical wisdom, considered in relation to the rest of *NE*. He stresses that Aristotle's claim is not that contemplation can, or should, become the whole of one's life, but that it should become its dominant and shaping goal. Aristotle assumes that the person leading such a life will possess, and exercise, the ethical virtues, both in the way that he creates the right conditions for contemplation and in the practical, sometimes other-related, activities that he performs: 'in so far as he is a human being and shares his life with a number of people [*πλείοσι συζῆ*], he chooses to act in accordance with [ethical] virtue.'²⁴⁵ Kraut also stresses that contemplation (which signifies, primarily, philosophical activity) is

²⁴³ Irwin's silence in (1988) about *NE* 10. 7–8 is in sharp contrast with his attempt to render Plato's account of the philosopher-rulers' motivation compatible with an altruism-centred framework: see Irwin (1977), 233–48; (1995), 298–303, 311–16; and 4.5 above, text to nn. 122–36. Irwin (1985), *s.v.* 'happiness', 407–8, offers an 'inclusive' reading of Aristotle's conception of happiness in *NE* as a whole, and emphasizes the preference for contemplation in 10. 7–8.

²⁴⁴ Kraut (1989), ch. 2, 78–86 (like Kahn (1981), 21–7) presents (what I see as) a qualified version of the egoism-altruism contrast, by comparison with the models outlined in 5.3 above, text to nn. 55–66. The main thrust of their arguments is the negative point that Aristotle's position (including that of 10. 7–8) need not be seen as egoistic, a view which can be accepted without claiming that the egoism-altruism contrast forms part of Aristotle's framework of thinking. Irwin (1988), ch. 18, 390–7 (like (1977), 233–48, and (1995), 308–13), makes a stronger claim for the relevance of altruism to Greek theory.

²⁴⁵ *NE* 1178^b5–6, taken with 1178^a9–22. What is indicated here is the plurality of types of relationship that make up the 'human' life rather than the special partnership in contemplation considered elsewhere (see n. 246 below). However, the person whose overall goal is contemplation does not shape his life so as to maximize the opportunity for practical virtuous action in the same way as the person leading a purely 'human' life. See Kraut (1989), 177–82, 188–9, 341–53; also Kenny (1992), 90–1, 105, modifying Kenny (1978), 214.

not conceived by Aristotle as normally or necessarily solitary, but rather as a co-operative activity, and one that can figure as a key component of virtuous friendship.²⁴⁶ In addition, Kraut sees 10. 7–8, taken in the context of *NE* as a whole, as providing a post-theoretical perspective in which the value of ethical virtue can be better understood, namely as an expression (though not the highest expression) of the distinctively human capacity for reason.²⁴⁷

There is much in Kraut's interpretation of the content of Aristotle's theory which is compatible with the approach adopted here.²⁴⁸ But I think that many of his points fit better into the alternative ethical and philosophical framework outlined in 5.3 (centred on the ideas of the life of shared or reciprocated benefit and of shared deepening of understanding of what a human life involves) than into the altruism-centred framework whose relevance he presupposes. This is the case with Kraut's point that Aristotle's picture of the contemplative life is that of a life which is, in principle, shared and co-operative rather than solitary.²⁴⁹ Also, Kraut's emphasis on the thought that the contemplative life both builds on, and provides analytic understanding of, virtuous character and practical reasoning fits well with the idea that the function of reflective debate is to deepen the understanding of what a (shared) human life involves.²⁵⁰

In 5.3, I also made some related suggestions about characteristic features of the ethical framework of Greek philosophy which are, perhaps, less congenial to Kraut's line of approach,²⁵¹ but which, none the less, seem relevant to Aristotle's argument *NE* 10. 7–8. One is the thought that to engage in reflective debate about the

²⁴⁶ Kraut (1989), 74, 170–8, 182–4, referring to, e.g., *NE* 1170^b11–14, 1172^a5, *EE* 1245^a22, ^b4. In 1177^a33–^b1, the point is not that the wise person necessarily contemplates 'on his own' (or does so better), but that he *can* do so (by contrast with practical virtuous actions) 'though he perhaps does so better if he has co-workers [sunergous]'. On what 'contemplation' involves, see text to n. 281 below.

²⁴⁷ Kraut (1989), 59–60, and ch. 6, esp. 341–5, referring to *NE* 1.7 and 6.1, 5, 7, 13, as well as 10. 7–8.

²⁴⁸ For some qualifications, see n. 251 below.

²⁴⁹ See refs. in n. 246 above; 5.3 above, text to nn. 78–86; and, on Aristotle's model of the mutually beneficial shared life, 5.4 above, text to nn. 130–3, 150–6.

²⁵⁰ See refs. in nn. 245, 246, and 249 above. Contrast the tendency in the work of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen to conceive ethical reflection in individual, self-related terms: see 5.5 above, text to nn. 235–7.

²⁵¹ I have emphasized more than Kraut (1989) (1) the extent to which Aristotle's commendation of the contemplative life conflicts with the conventional valuation of practical virtue; and (2) the extent to which acceptance of Aristotle's claim may involve a practical redirection of one's life rather than the post-theoretical validation of virtuous practical reasoning stressed by Kraut in ch. 6, 341–7.

proper goals of human life and to carry this debate to a soundly based conclusion is to provide the greatest possible benefit to others as well as to oneself. This is so even if the outcome of such debate is *not* to validate the kind of life (described in *NE* 10. 7–8 as the 'human' life) centred on practical virtuous actions involving other people which is normally regarded as, in an obvious way, benefiting others.²⁵² A related thought is that, in so far as reflective debate legitimately shapes (and may reshape) the direction of one's own, and other's lives, it constitutes a type of practical activity, and one that should inform practical reasoning.²⁵³ This is so even if the outcome of such debate (as it is in 10. 7–8) is to prefer contemplative wisdom to practical wisdom as the shaping goal of one's life. These seemingly paradoxical ideas seem to me fully in line with the style of argument in 10. 7–8. They also seem to me to be integral elements in Aristotle's particular way of acknowledging, while also seeking to resolve, the tension between the claims of the contemplative and practical lives to count as the best possible human life. Put differently, they form part of the way in which Aristotle's reflectively based argument both presupposes, and seeks to transform, the understanding of what virtuous rationality means (what it means to be fully 'reason-ruled') which is embodied in action-guiding interpersonal and communal discourse.²⁵⁴

This line of thought can be developed by pursuing Sarah Broadie's suggestion that *NE* 10. 7–8 should be understood as a kind of dialogue, directed specifically at the kind of audience which possesses ethical virtue and appreciates the value of virtuous practical reasoning, and designed to prove to this audience the superior value of the contemplative life.²⁵⁵ This is, in general, the kind of audience which Aristotle presents as that required for (ethically valid) reflective debate, a point reiterated in *NE* 10. 9, directly after these two chapters.²⁵⁶ An audience of this kind will recognize, and respond to, the characterization of the combination of practical reasoning and

²⁵² See text to n. 239 above. However, as noted in 5.3 above, text to nn. 86–7, reflective debate is not considered valuable in Greek ethical philosophy *only* in so far as it benefits *others*, as it would be in an ethical framework centred on altruism.

²⁵³ See *NE* 1103^b26–30, 1179^a20–2.

²⁵⁴ See also 5.3 above, text to nn. 87–94; also, on the tension between practical and contemplative lives, text to nn. 260–2 below.

²⁵⁵ Broadie (1989), 392–8.

²⁵⁶ *NE* 1179^b4–29, taken with Burnyeat (1980), 75–81; see also 5.4 above, text to nn. 166–7.

virtuous dispositions (as distinct from, for instance, the life of sensual pleasure) as the pre-eminently 'human' life.²⁵⁷ The imagined objection countered in the course of the argument, that the contemplative life will be 'too great for life as a human being' (*kat' anthropon*) can plausibly be attributed to such a listener.²⁵⁸ The latter will also be best equipped to see the point of the qualification noted by Kraut: that even the person who lives the 'divine' life shaped by the overall goal of contemplation will also, 'as a human being' express the ethical virtues in practical actions towards other people.²⁵⁹

This point can be restated in this form. Unless the audience of this discussion recognizes the value of virtuous practical action as well as contemplation, they will not see that there is a substantive issue under consideration. But Aristotle's presentation makes it very clear that there *is* an issue (for him, for the imagined audience, and for anyone who lives the life recommended). Indeed, of the Greek philosophical texts considered here, none emphasizes more clearly the competing claims of the lives both of virtuous practical action and of contemplation.²⁶⁰ Plato's characterization of the motivation of the philosopher-rulers for re-entering the cave implies a similar tension, underlining *both* the compulsion involved in making them leave the maximally happy contemplative life (the 'islands of the blessed') and their readiness (*προθυμείσθαι*) to do so in reciprocation of their upbringing.²⁶¹ A similar tension is also indicated (in a way that suggests a form of resolution) in Diotima's mysteries in the *Symposium*.²⁶² But it is NE 10. 7–8 which articulates most starkly the conflict between the ideals of virtuous practical action and contemplative understanding.

The conflict presented in these texts can be seen, in turn, as a version of a more general one: between the ideals (including that of

²⁵⁷ NE 1178^a9–22 (on the coupling of virtuous dispositions and practical reasoning) see e.g. NE 2. 4, esp. 1105^a28–33; 6. 12, esp. 1144^a6–9. On the exclusive focus on these two kinds of life, ruling out the life of sensual pleasure (*βίον . . . ἀπολαυστικόν*) noted in NE 1095^b14–22, see Kraut (1989), 15–20.

²⁵⁸ NE 1177^b26–31; Aristotle counters the objection (and reconceives the significance of the terms, 'human' and 'divine' deployed by the imagined objector) in 1177^b31–1178^a22, 1178^b7–32, 1179^a13–32.

²⁵⁹ See text to n. 245 above.

²⁶⁰ On the value of virtuous practical action, see text to nn. 255–8 above; on the claims of the contemplative life, see 1177^a17–^b26, ^b31–1178^a8, ^a23–^b32, and text to nn. 277–89 below.

²⁶¹ R. 519c–d, esp. c5–6, 520b, 520d6–8; see 4.6 above, text to nn. 227–58.

²⁶² See 5.7 below, text to nn. 325–8.

virtuous rationality or 'reasonableness') promoted by action-guiding interpersonal and communal discourse, on the one hand, and by reflective debate, on the other.²⁶³ This latter, more general, conflict is also acknowledged (and, in different ways, resolved) by the Epicurean and Stoic theories.²⁶⁴ As I have suggested earlier, a similar type of conflict can also be seen as expressed in the representation of the problematic heroes of Greek epic and poetry. The poetic versions of this conflict centre, typically, not so much on the tension between the claims of the practical and contemplative lives,²⁶⁵ but rather on that between the ethico-emotional stance standardly validated by action-guiding interpersonal and communal discourse and that which is the outcome of reflective reasoning.²⁶⁶ But the problematic ethico-emotional stances of figures such as Achilles, Ajax, and Medea imply certain general claims about the form that human life, at its best, should take;²⁶⁷ and, to that degree, the conflicts displayed in the poetic texts prefigure the philosophical issue articulated in NE 10. 7–8 and elsewhere.²⁶⁸ Also, as emphasized in Chapter 3, the poetic texts present this conflict as one which is also acknowledged by the problematic heroes themselves (in a way that generates internal psycho-ethical tensions); and this can be seen as a further point of similarity between the philosophical and poetic versions of this conflict.²⁶⁹

As pointed out in Chapter 3, the inner tensions thus generated are sometimes exhibited in Greek epic and tragedy in expressions which imply identification with, or dissociation from, a psychic 'part' which represents one of the competing stances. This is especially clear in the alternating stances, and expressions of self-identification, in Medea's great monologue. This is also a feature of Achilles' discourse in *Iliad* 9 and 16; and, in the epic and tragic texts, this feature is linked with the presentation of the figure (by herself and others) as

²⁶³ See text to nn. 251–4 above; and on this conflict as one which tends to be generated by the 'objective-participant' conception of personality, see above 3.6, text to nn. 244–6; 4.7, text to nn. 268–78; 6.7 below, text to nn. 215–35.

²⁶⁴ See 5.7 below, text to nn. 345–59, 360–4.

²⁶⁵ This issue is anticipated in *Il.* 9. 410–16 (see 2.7 above, text to nn. 183–5); *S. Ai.* 473–80 (see 3.4 above, text to n. 115). A key philosophical instance of this issue is *Pl. Grg.* 484c–488a.

²⁶⁶ See above, 3.1, text to n. 23, and refs., in n. 23; 4.7, text to nn. 260–1.

²⁶⁷ See 4.7 above, text to nn. 273–8.

²⁶⁸ See 4.7 above, text to nn. 259–78; 6.7 below, text to nn. 215–20.

²⁶⁹ See above 3.6, text to nn. 234–9; refs. in n. 261 above; 4.6 above, text to nn. 227–9, 258; and text to nn. 273–4 below.

psychologically active or passive.²⁷⁰ The principal determinant of what is or is not 'oneself' is that which seems 'reasonable' (justifiable by ethical reasons) either by conventional interactive standards or by those which are the outcome of reflection.²⁷¹ Aristotle's characterization of one or other human psychological function as 'what each of us is' (like some analogous moves by other Greek thinkers)²⁷² can be seen as a philosophical continuation of this feature of Greek poetry. Aristotle's differing formulations of 'what each of us is' in NE 9. 4, 8 and in 10. 7–8 (as practical and contemplative reasoning, respectively) can also be seen as continuing, and taking further, the same kind of conflict which is displayed in the poetic expressions of self-identification: that between the norms recognized by conventional interactive discourse and by reflective debate.²⁷³ In Medea's great monologue, the tension between these two modes of self-identification is explicit and fully acknowledged.²⁷⁴ In NE 10. 7–8, although the underlying conflict (broadly similar to that in the poetic cases) is acknowledged fully in other ways, the disparity between the senses given to the idea of 'what each of us is' in the two passages is not. But is it acknowledged by implication? Should Aristotle's use of the phrase in this way in 10. 7–8 be seen as a deliberate redefinition, and as a key part of his way of resolving the conflict which he acknowledges?

It is possible to explain the disparity between the two senses simply by reference to Aristotle's differing objectives in the two passages, without assuming any acknowledgement of the disparity by Aristotle. Kraut, for instance, explains the disparity in this way. The formulation of 9. 4 and 9. 8 simply leaves out of account the distinction between theoretical and practical reason. It identifies (as 'what each of us is') the aspect of the characteristically human function of reason that is most relevant to the interpersonal relationships and correlated psychic states of virtue-friendship, namely those of practical reasoning exercised according to ethical virtue.

²⁷⁰ See above 3.1, text to nn. 15–16; 3.2, text to nn. 44–50, 68–85, 92–7; 3.5, text to nn. 164–8, 176–90.

²⁷¹ See above 3.1, text to nn. 17–23; 3.2, text to nn. 54–5, 74–85; 3.5, text to nn. 164–8, 185–90.

²⁷² See e.g. Pl. R. 588c–591e (on which, see 6.6 below, text to nn. 176–94) and 611c–612a.

²⁷³ See refs. in nn. 269–70. For the idea that the philosophical versions of this conflict are, in some ways, more problematic and less soluble than the poetic versions, see 4.7 above, text to nn. 290–2.

²⁷⁴ See 3.5 above, esp. text to nn. 177–90.

When the question of the comparative evaluation of practical and theoretical reasoning is brought into the picture, a different (and more theoretically grounded) specification is made, in line with the argumentation of 10. 7–8.²⁷⁵ However, it is also possible to read the argument of 10. 7–8 as expressing an (implicit) acknowledgement of the disparity of meanings attached to the phrase; and thus to interpret the formulation of 10. 7–8 as an overt redefinition. It is also possible to see this redefinition, if present, as a crucial part in the dialogue with the type of audience described earlier, as a way of deepening *their* understanding of what is involved in realizing 'what each of us is', and (thus) as a way of resolving the conflict between the claims of practical and contemplative wisdom.²⁷⁶ This line of interpretation is not invalidated by the fact that the *Nicomachean Ethics*, like other Aristotelian extant works, is not a 'book', published by the author as a finished whole, but a composite of lecture notes. The points made about the interconnections about the different parts of the NE hold good provided we grant (what no one, I think, denies) that all the parts of NE derive from Aristotle himself. Therefore, although in what follows I write as though I were interpreting the relationship between the parts of a single work, the interpretation would still hold good, even if regarded as an analysis of the relationship between ideas put forward by Aristotle at various stages in his ethical lectures.²⁷⁷

NE 10. 7 begins with what seems to be a clear reference back to the general characterization in 1.7 of the human good (happiness) as 'activity of the psyche according to virtue', and also to the further qualification that 'if there are several virtues, according to the best and most perfect [*teleiote*]'.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ See 5.5 above, text to nn. 177, 188–92. See also Kraut (1989), 128–31, 189–90; Price (1989), 107.

²⁷⁶ See text to nn. 251–9 above. Kahn (1981), 34–40 also sees the definition of 'what each of us is' in 10. 7–8 as a more metaphysically profound account than that given in 9. 4, 8 and, in effect, a redefinition of this: see also Rorty (1980b), 388–91.

²⁷⁷ On this problem in the exegesis of Aristotle's ethical (and other) works, see Annas (1993), 261, n. 51; also Kenny (1978).

²⁷⁸ NE 1098^a16–18. For the purposes of this discussion, I am assuming (1) that NE 1. 7 and 10. 7–8 present a consistent theory; (2) that the theory contains a 'dominant' concept of happiness; (3) that *teleiote* signifies 'most perfect' rather than 'most complete' (the latter translation being favoured by those who adopt the 'inclusive' interpretation). For this view, see e.g. Kraut (1989), 237–44, 312–13; Kenny (1992), 86–7, also 17–18; on the larger debate, see text to nn. 240–2 above.

If happiness is activity in accordance with virtue, it is reasonable that it should be according to the highest [or 'most dominant', *κατὰ τὴν κρατίστην*] virtue; and this would be the virtue of the best part of us [*aristou*]. This part is mind [*nous*] or whatever else seems to be our natural ruler and guide and seems to understand what is fine and divine, being itself either divine or the most divine element in us. Thus, the activity of this part in accordance with its proper virtue would be perfect [*teleia*] happiness. As has been said, this activity is contemplative [*theoretike*].²⁷⁹

The final sentence seems, equally clearly, to refer back to the account of the relationship between practical and theoretical wisdom given in NE 6, to which there are apparent allusions earlier in the passage.²⁸⁰ NE 6 offers the following general account of the relationship between practical wisdom (*phronesis*) and contemplative wisdom, *sophia*. Practical wisdom is the virtue of the capacity (practical reasoning) which is 'directive', in the sense that it deliberates about the best means to achieve our goals. Contemplative wisdom is the virtue of the capacity by which we understand the fundamental principles of reality. Contemplative wisdom is the higher of the two virtues because it grasps these fundamental, unalterable principles (by contrast with the alterable subject-matter of practical reasoning) and because the scope of its subject-matter goes beyond the human affairs that form the content of practical reasoning to include the 'divine' elements of the universe, such as the heavenly bodies. Although practical wisdom is 'directive' in the sense noted earlier, it is not 'directive' (*kuria*) over contemplative wisdom as being superior to it but rather gives orders (*epitattei*) 'for the sake of' (*heneka*) this. Thus, contemplative wisdom is directive or dominant in the sense of being the overall goal for which (in the best possible human state) practical reasoning gives its orders, just as health is the overall goal for which medicine gives its orders.²⁸¹

²⁷⁹ NE 1177^a12–18, sentence structure modified as in Irwin (1985), 284, with the first two transliterated terms converted into nominative form.

²⁸⁰ For 'mind' (*nous*) as ruler and guide (1177^a14–15), cf. practical wisdom as described in 1145^a8–9, NE 6. 5 *passim*. For mind as 'having understanding of fine and divine things', cf. the description of theoretical wisdom in 1141^a18–b8, esp. ^a33–b3; for theoretical wisdom as, in another sense, dominant, see text to n. 281 below.

²⁸¹ NE 1145^a6–11, taken with 1139^a6–17, 1141^a18–b12, 1144^a1–6. See further Kraut (1989), 348–9; Broadie (1989), 386–7; Kenny (1992), 98–9. For the idea that the functions of practical wisdom include deliberation about the means to achieve the best possible human life (which is not quite identical with deliberation *about* ends), see 1140^a25–8, 1141^b12–14, 1142^b28–33. See further Sorabji (1980), 205–14; Wiggins (1980a), 227–37; Lear (1988), 143–51; Kraut (1989), 327–34, 353–7.

The start of NE 10. 7 does not refer in the same, relatively explicit, way to the formulation of 'what each of us is' in NE 9. 4, 8. But the methodological move made at the start of 10. 7, that of defining the value of an activity (or virtue) by reference to (what is claimed to be) the 'best' part of us recalls that made in 9. 4, 8.²⁸² The initial characterization of our 'best' part, as that which is naturally able to 'lead' (*ἄρχειν*) and 'guide' (*ἡγεῖσθαι*) recalls the characterization of 'what each of us is' in 9. 4, 8: namely as that which is 'the most controlling part' (*τὸ κυριώτατον*) of us, and which is best able to 'rule' (*κρατεῖν*) desires and actions, that is, practical reason.²⁸³ Thus, it is possible to read the start of 10. 7 as signalling a continuation of the line of thought presented in those passages of 9. 4, 8, a line of thought that is taken further, and rendered explicit, in the revised formulation of 'what each of us is' given at the end of 10. 7 and start of 10. 8, namely as theoretical reason. In the latter passage, the move made in 9. 4, 8, that of identifying some 'part' of us as best, and as 'what each of us is' is taken further. The functions of practical reason which are presented as 'dominant' in 9. 4, 8 are described as 'yoked together with' (*συνέζευκται*) virtue of character, and those two together are said to be 'interlinked' (*συνηρημέναι*) with the emotions (*pathe*) and to constitute features of our life as a psychological 'compound' (*συνθέτου*).²⁸⁴ Theoretical reason is presented as, by contrast, 'small in bulk', indeed, in some sense, 'separate' from the life of the psychophysical compound. But it is, none the less, 'what each of us is', in so far as it is 'dominant' (*τὸ κύριον*), and the 'highest' part of us (*κράτιστον*), and also 'better' (*ἄμεινον*) and greater in power and honour (*δυνάμει καὶ τιμότητι*) than the functions of practical reason.²⁸⁵ If the start of 10. 7 alludes to the characterization of 'what each of us is' in 9. 4, 8, as well as to the correlated account of practical wisdom in NE 6, this subsequent passage (1177^b34–1178^a7)

²⁸² On this methodological move, see Price (1989), 107; Kraut (1989), 128–9; and text to nn. 270–4 above. The move is not, in itself, 'Archimedean', in the sense discussed in 5.5 above: see text to nn. 290–2 below.

²⁸³ Cf. NE 1177^a14–15 with 9. 8, 1168^b29–1169^a2, esp. 1168^b30–2, 9. 4, 1166^a13–23. For the idea of practical reason as 'directive', see also NE 6, refs. in n. 281, esp. 1145^a6–11, also NE 6. 5.

²⁸⁴ NE 1178^a16, 19–21; in 14–16, practical, virtuous actions in the interpersonal context are said to 'arise from the body', i.e. its needs, and virtue of character is said to 'be associated with' (*συνέζευκται*) the *pathe* (emotions and desires).

²⁸⁵ NE 10. 7–8, 1177^b35–1178^a3, 5–6; on the sense in which the theoretical functions of mind are 'separate' (*κεχωρισμένη*), 1178^a22, see e.g. Lear (1988), 293–308.

may be seen as consolidating the allusion, redeploying the key ideas, especially that of 'dominance', but in a substantively different way.

If this is a plausible picture of the interconnections between different parts of *NE* which are indicated by 10. 7–8, what larger implications follow from this? It follows, as suggested earlier, that the definition of 'what each of us is' in 10. 7–8 is not just different from that in 9. 4, 8, but is a deliberate, if not fully explicit, redefinition. If so, this fits in with the general characterization of the argument offered earlier, namely as a reflective dialogue directed at those who are predisposed to treat the exercise of practical reason combined with virtue of character as the highest human happiness, and designed to reshape their understanding of the nature of the highest human happiness.²⁸⁶ In 9. 4, 8, as I pointed out, there is little attempt to *prove* that virtuous practical reason is 'what each of us is'; this idea is used rather to encapsulate the picture of 'reasonableness' implied in conventional interactive discourse.²⁸⁷ In *NE* 6, although some argument is provided to support the priority (and, in some sense, 'dominance') of contemplative over practical wisdom, this argument is neither extensive nor directed specifically at the question of the nature of the highest mode of human happiness.²⁸⁸ This is the question which is taken up explicitly and at length in 10. 7–8. Aristotle offers a set of criteria according to which the exercise of theoretical wisdom can be seen as higher than that of practical wisdom: namely, being better, more continuous, more pleasant, more self-sufficient, more an end in itself, and more leisured.²⁸⁹

If the argument is to have any cogency, these criteria must be neutral as between the two kinds of life and thus capable of providing an independent standard. But these criteria are not presented as 'Archimedean', in the sense considered in the previous section, that is capable of persuading *anyone* of the merits of the life thus validated. The argument presupposes that both lives are already valued highly, and that the characterization of the lives in these terms, and with this ranking, will be intelligible to the audience. Also, as Kraut points out, the passage presenting theoretical reason as 'what each of us is' is better taken as encapsulating the content of

²⁸⁶ See text to nn. 251–9 above.

²⁸⁷ See 5.5 above, text to nn. 178–85, 197–203.

²⁸⁸ See *NE* 6. 7, 1141^a18–^b12, 1145^a6–11; and text to n. 281 above.

²⁸⁹ *NE* 1177^a19–^b26; the question of self-sufficiency is pursued in 1178^a23–^b7, ^b33–1179^a17. See further, on the application of these criteria, Kraut (1989), 348–52.

the preceding argument than as offering an independent argument. The passage expresses, in terms of 'what each of us is', and of the associated claims about what is 'human' and 'divine', the implications of the criteria offered for the highest human happiness.²⁹⁰ Therefore, although Aristotle evidently takes it that the conception of 'human' and 'divine' presupposed is philosophically justifiable, these ideas function here as ways of focusing a specific type of argument, and one whose cogency depends on the presuppositions of the audience about the lives so characterized as well as about the form of argument being deployed. The role of the notions of 'what each of us is', and of being 'human' and 'divine', is not 'Archimedean', in the sense discussed earlier, although these notions carry substantive weight in persuading the type of audience envisaged to modify their existing beliefs about the highest available human life.²⁹¹

5.7 POST-REFLECTIVE VIRTUE IN OTHER GREEK THEORIES

I conclude this chapter by considering other Greek theories which enable us to place in perspective Aristotle's way of deploying the idea of 'what each of us is' in *NE* 10. 7–8, and to consider the significance of his move as a means of resolving the conflict between pursuing one's own happiness and meeting the claims of others. All three theories considered are comparable in that they suggest ways in which post-reflective understanding can legitimately revise the conventional conception of virtue and happiness, and can in this way benefit others as well as oneself. Two of the theories (that of Plato's *Symposium* and Epicurus) do so in the form that is characteristic of the other strand of Greek theory noted earlier, in which the emphasis falls on the revisionary role of post-reflective understanding, without the stress on the grounding role of pre-reflective virtue that we find in Aristotle and Plato's *Republic*. The third theory considered, the Stoic, seems to be closer to the Aristotelian pattern, in this respect. But all the theories, arguably, embody, in somewhat different ways, the kind of framework of thinking about interpersonal

²⁹⁰ Kraut (1989), 352–3 n. 34. Thus e.g. contemplation is 'divine' in so far as it is most an end in itself (1177^b1–4, 20), a thought developed in 1178^b8–22; it is *autarkes* 'self-sufficient' (and, in this sense, at least, 'separate') in requiring little of the body-based materials and interpersonal connections that make up the fully 'human' life; cf. 1177^a27–^b1 (developed in 1178^a23–^b7) with 1178^a10–22.

²⁹¹ See 6.5 below, text to nn. 113–21.

ethics and the role of reflection outlined earlier (5.3), as well as expressing the conception of the person that I am calling 'objective-participant'.²⁹²

This is the right way to approach the mysteries of love or to be led by someone else, beginning from concrete instances of beauty, always to go up for the sake of reaching beauty in itself [ἐνεκα τοῦ καλοῦ]. Like someone using a ladder, you should go up from one to two, and from two to all beautiful bodies, and from beautiful bodies to beautiful practices [ἐπιτηδεύματα], and from practices to beautiful forms of learning [μαθήματα]. From forms of learning, you should end up at that learning which is of nothing but beauty in itself, so that you can complete the process of knowing what beauty really is [ὁ ἐστι καλόν]. (Plato, *Symposium* 211b7-d1)

The 'mysteries' of Diotima, which form the climax of Socrates' speech in the *Symposium* have aroused a debate of a similar type to that aroused by Aristotle NE 10. 7-8. This debate centres on the question whether the 'ascent of desire', presented there (illustrated by the preceding quotation) should be interpreted 'exclusively', as involving the replacement of love of other people by love of knowledge of the truth, or 'inclusively', as showing how love of other people can be progressively informed by deeper knowledge of the truth.²⁹³ On the face of it, the mysteries lend themselves most readily to an exclusive interpretation.²⁹⁴ But the inclusive one has been maintained recently by several scholars, including Irwin, who finds in the ascent of desire a version of the idea that reflective self-understanding, if carried to its proper conclusion, leads to the development of altruism.²⁹⁵

As elsewhere, Irwin's analysis tends to present reflection and its outcome in terms of the individual's understanding of herself.²⁹⁶ A version of the inclusive reading which is more congenial to the interpretation of Greek ethical thinking adopted here is that of A. W.

²⁹² See above 5.1, text to n. 9; 5.3, text to nn. 87-94.

²⁹³ On the 'inclusive'-'exclusive' distinction, see Moravcsik (1971), 293; see also n. 17 above, and, on the comparable Aristotelian debate, 5.6 above, text to nn. 240-1.

²⁹⁴ For two famous 'exclusive' readings, see Vlastos (1981), ch. 1, Nussbaum (1986), ch. 6; on the conceptual assumptions underlying their approach to this topic, see Gill (1990e), 69-70, 72-6.

²⁹⁵ See 5.2 above, text to nn. 15-22. Irwin's (1977) interpretation is presented, in part, as a response to that of Vlastos, and showing how his (Kantian) demand for altruism is met by *Smp.*; see Irwin (1977), 342-3, taken with 167-9, 234-7, and 267-72; also (1995), 310-11, taken in the context of 306-13.

²⁹⁶ See refs. in n. 295 above; also above 4.5, text to nn. 122-37; 5.2, text to nn. 27-33; 5.4, text to nn. 235-7.

Price. Price finds both in Aristotle's conception of ideal friendship and in Plato's conception of ideal love (in the *Symposium* as well as *Phaedrus*) a broadly similar picture of ethical life and reflection. This is that of the—mutually benefiting—shared life of virtuous people, which can also serve as the context for shared reflection on the nature and basis of this shared life.²⁹⁷ On the interpretation of Diotima's mysteries, Price acknowledges that the textual evidence for claiming that the ascent is inclusive rather than exclusive is not unambiguous.²⁹⁸ But Price points out that, at each stage of the ascent (including, by implication at least, the final one) we find the idea that the heightened understanding of the nature of beauty stimulates ethically educative discourse between lover and loved one.²⁹⁹ This pattern fits Diotima's analysis of the fundamental nature and basis of all desire (*eros*), namely as self-immortalization through propagation on (or in) what is beautiful.³⁰⁰ Thus, at least in the kind of relationship that Plato seems principally to have in mind in the mysteries (which Price calls 'educative pederasty'), it is possible to see a single one-to-one relationship between lover and loved one persisting through all, or most, of the ascent.³⁰¹

What form does this self-immortalization take, in Price's view, and what kind of 'self' is immortalized? Price finds implicit in Plato (and Aristotle) a distinction between the individual person as soul and substance and the character or quality of the psycho-ethical life lived by the person.³⁰² In the *Symposium*, at least, Price sees the emphasis as falling on the 'vicarious' immortality created by the

²⁹⁷ See Price (1989), 45-54, 95-102, 114-24, 126-30; see also 5.4 above, nn. 143, 152, 157. Like Irwin (1977) on *Smp.* (refs. in n. 295 above), Price frames his account as a defence of the Greek theories against Vlastos' (1981, ch. 1.) Kantian critique; see Price (1989), 97-102, 105-6, 124-5, 130, also Gill (1990f). See also n. 306 below.

²⁹⁸ Price (1989), 43-5; (1991), 290; see further n. 309 below.

²⁹⁹ Price (1989), 49, 52-3, referring to *Smp.* 210a7-8, c1-3, d4-6; the 'generation' or 'propagation' (τίκτω) of 'true virtue' in 212a3-6 may be generation in another (as well as oneself) through discourse.

³⁰⁰ *Smp.* 206b-207a esp. 206e5; for educative discourse as a subdivision of this pattern, see 209b-c.

³⁰¹ Price (1989), 46, (B1), acknowledges a possible change of partners, from someone beautiful in body to someone beautiful in psyche ('mind' or 'character'), in *Smp.* 210b6-c3. Price, 48, notes that Diotima presents the whole ascent, including (perhaps) its conclusion, as achieved 'through loving boys rightly' (τὸ ὁρθῶς παιδεύασθαι) at 211b5-6.

³⁰² Price (1989), 30-1; also 105, on Aristotle's 'two notions of the "self": a subject of choice and desire (a person and a substance) and . . . [a] practical persona . . . realized in sequences of . . . desires, choices, actions, and results', the latter making up ethical character and happiness (*eudaimonia*) or its opposite.

transmission of the kind of life that one lives, and values, and 'identifies' oneself with, rather than on the 'proprietary' immortality of the person as separable soul which seems to be envisaged elsewhere in Plato.³⁰³ The person who completes the ascent of desire gains benefit partly from coming to live, and value, and identify himself with, the highest available human life (the one that makes him 'divinely loved', *theophiles*, and as 'immortal', *athanatos*, as a human being can be).³⁰⁴ But, in Price's view, such a person gains the further benefit of transmitting his life to the loved one whose life he shapes by their relationship. The virtue which he 'generates' (elsewhere described as the 'children' of their shared relationship) belongs as much to the loved one as the lover, and this mode of 'self'-immortalization thus benefits himself as much as the other person.³⁰⁵

Price's analysis of the role in ethical development of self-identification with a given form of life (*bios*) is highly suggestive, and may have a relevance that goes beyond the texts that he discusses specifically. His account of the Platonic and Aristotelian interpersonal ideals (as a mutually benefiting mode of shared life, providing the basis for shared improvement through reflection) is similar to the general framework of ethical thinking proposed earlier.³⁰⁶ Price's model fits the *Phaedrus* especially, in which the emphasis falls *both* on the erotic intensity of (one-to-one) relationships *and* on the way in which these relationships serve as the context for mutual ethical improvement which may involve philosophical reflection.³⁰⁷ Price's discussion of the *Symposium* also illuminates those aspects of that dialogue (including some in the mysteries) which seem, like the *Phaedrus*, to refer especially to one-

³⁰³ Price (1989), 34-5, 50-3. In framing his idea of 'vicarious' immortality, Price refers to Parfit's ideas about the sharing or transmission of personal identity (see Parfit (1984), chs. 10 and 13), but distinguishes Parfit's 'radical' idea of transmitting personal identity from his more 'modest' idea of transmitting one's life (1989), 23-5, 30-5). On Parfit, see 5.3 above, text to nn. 62-3, 66, and, on fundamental differences between Parfit's theory and the Greek theories, see 5.5 above, text to nn. 204-5.

³⁰⁴ *Smp.* 211d-212a, esp. a6-7, taken by Price (1989), 52-3, to signify (the basis of) 'proprietary' immortality.

³⁰⁵ *Smp.* 212a5-6 (τεκόντι ... ἀρετήν, 'generating virtue'), 209c, esp. c4; Price (1989), 52-3. The same process, perpetuated by the loved-one-turned-lover, could, in due course, yield self-immortalization for him also (Price, 29).

³⁰⁶ See 5.3 above, text to nn. 78-86 (Price's analysis has helped to shape this account).

³⁰⁷ See Pl. *Phdr.* 244a-257b, esp. 252b-253c, 254b-e, 255b-256e; also Price (1989), ch. 3, esp. 84-94. Price's preference for the pattern of *Phdr.* rather than that of *Smp.* is stated clearly in 55-8.

to-one 'educative pederasty'.³⁰⁸ However, I think that we can get closer still to the distinctive thinking contained in Diotima's mysteries by exploring certain points which Price does not emphasize. One, already noted, is the fact that Plato's presentation here (unlike that of the *Phaedrus*) does not make it wholly clear whether, and in what sense, the ascent of desire is 'inclusive'.³⁰⁹ Secondly, the ascent of desire is not presented as occurring within a single one-to-one relationship but rather in an intriguing variant of this pattern. It is situated in a triangular relationship between guide, lover, and (at least one) loved one, in which the lover is shown how, by loving in the way recommended, he can complete the ascent.³¹⁰ The complex syntactical form of the relevant sentences underlines both the interconnected set of stages involved and the interconnected roles of guide, lover, and loved one(s) in enabling the lover to carry the ascent through to its conclusion.³¹¹

What is the significance of this triangular relationship? The implications of this can be analysed, in the first instance, by reference to the image of 'the self in dialogue' and the way in which the three kinds of dialogue associated with this image are deployed in the Platonic dialogues. In the *Phaedrus*, the presentation of the lovers' relationship is couched especially as the interplay between two of these types of dialogue: (1) erotically charged interpersonal exchange and (2) the 'dialogue' which expresses the power-struggle between the three parts of the psyche.³¹² The third type of dialogue, reflective or analytic dialectic, does not figure explicitly in the palinode, though it may be presumed as forming part of the relationship of the 'philosophical' psycho-ethical types.³¹³ The stress falls

³⁰⁸ See text to nn. 299-301 above. Cf. *Smp.* 209b-c with *Phdr.* 252e-253a, 256a-b.

³⁰⁹ It is ambiguous (1) whether the process involves one loved person or more, see n. 301 above; (2) whether the final stage 'generates' virtue in the loved person or just the lover (212a3-6), see nn. 298-9 above.

³¹⁰ Price (1989), 56-7 and 99, notes the presence of this triangular relationship but does not explore its significance.

³¹¹ On the role of the guide see *Smp.* 210a6-7, c3, c7, e3, 211c1 (the latter cited in text to nn. 292-3 above); on the syntax, see Dover (1980), 155.

³¹² *Phdr.* 253d-254e (intrapsychic dialogue); 255a-256e (combination of interpersonal exchange and intrapsychic dialogue, issuing in certain modes of shared psycho-ethical life, 256b-e). On the interplay between these types of dialogue, see Ferrari (1987), ch. 6, esp. 185-203; Price (1989), 79-84; Rowe (1990), 230-45. The three parts of the psyche in *Phdr.* are similar in type to those in *R.* (see 4.2 above, text to nn. 35-6).

³¹³ On philosophical psychic types as specially able to understand Forms, see *Phdr.* 249a2, c4-6, 252c-253a, esp. 252e3, taken with 250e-251a, 254b-c, 256c-e, esp. c1.

rather on the thought that success or failure in gaining objective ethical understanding (knowledge of Forms) depends crucially on the outcome of the two kinds of dialogue mentioned (interpersonal and intrapsychic dialogue); and that, if such understanding is achieved, it transforms these types of dialogue.³¹⁴ In the *Republic*, by contrast, the educational programme analysed in the previous chapter emphasizes the role of reflective dialectic, and of the knowledge which it yields, in shaping the other types of dialogue. Intrapsychic dialogue is affected both by the discourse of interpersonal and communal interchange and by post-dialectical understanding. In the ideal educational pattern, intrapsychic dialogue is shaped first by right interpersonal exchange (which must, in turn, be informed by post-dialectical understanding) and then, directly, by the latter type of understanding.³¹⁵

The mysteries of Diotima, like the palinode of the *Phaedrus*, allocate a role to personal interchange and the associated psycho-ethical responses in enabling the person principally concerned (that is, the lover) to carry out the ascent that yields objective ethical knowledge.³¹⁶ But, as in the *Republic*, there is also stress on the thought that the whole process must be shaped by post-reflective understanding (here embodied in the role of the guide) if the process is to be carried out properly.³¹⁷ The two kinds of dialogue present in the mysteries are both related to this pattern. One of these is the educative discourse of lover to loved one, which expresses both (1) a certain kind of ethico-emotional response to the other person and (2) a certain degree of understanding of what 'beauty' really is.³¹⁸ The other, implicit but essential, is the post-reflective advice of the guide about the nature and purpose of the ascent.³¹⁹ From a rather different perspective, the latter advice is identical with the speech containing

³¹⁴ *Phdr.* 250e–256e, esp. 254b–c and 256a–e, taken with 248a–b and 249e–250c.

³¹⁵ See above 4.2, text to nn. 36–68; 4.4, text to nn. 92–105, 117–19; 4.6, text to nn. 189–225.

³¹⁶ *Smp.* 210a4–8, b8–c3, taken with the negative reactions of 210b5–6, c5–6, 211d3–8, c2–3.

³¹⁷ See refs. in n. 311 above. Cf. the role of the guide in helping someone out of the cave in *R.* 515c–516c, and of the philosopher-rulers in shaping the psycho-ethical patterns of the community (*R.* 500b–501b, taken with 400d–402c); see also 4.6 above, text to nn. 189–225.

³¹⁸ See refs. in n. 299 above.

³¹⁹ The guide thus plays a crucial role in activating the motivation to complete the ascent; this motivation is not otherwise explained by the narrative of the ascent, as is pointed out by Price (1989), 42, and Nussbaum (1986) 179.

the mysteries (*Smp.* 210a–212a) which functions both as Socrates' report of Diotima's 'prophetic' teachings and as the climax of Socrates' philosophical contribution to a largely unphilosophical series of speeches about the nature of *eros* ('love' or 'desire'). In terms of the drama of the dialogue, the relationship between Diotima and Socrates, duplicated in the relationship between Socrates and his audience, enacts that between guide and lover in the mysteries.³²⁰

After completing his account of the mysteries of Diotima, Socrates says he has been 'convinced' by them, and continues in this way (212b2–7):

Since I have been convinced, I try to convince others that you could not find a better collaborator with human nature in obtaining this possession³²¹ than love [or 'desire', *eros*]. So I tell everyone that they should honour love, and I myself give honour to the works of love [*ta erotika*] and practise them above all [or 'in a distinctive way', *διαφερόντως*] and urge others to do the same.

This passage, like the mysteries as a whole, is ambiguous about whether the ascent of desire is envisaged as occurring within a love-relationship, as usually understood, or as taking the place of such a relationship. But what is not ambiguous is the advice to shape one's life, including one's interpersonal relationships, whether 'erotic' or not, in the light of the picture of the highest possible mode of human happiness offered by Diotima (211c–212a). It is of interest that Socrates lays stress on his wish to convince other people to adopt the same way of life which he has been led to adopt by Diotima. This suggests that, even if the conclusion of the ascent is conceived as involving only the lover, rather than the loved one as well, it does have interpersonal consequences, namely those of making the lover want to urge others to make the ascent for themselves.³²² As Price notes, each stage of the ascent, except (possibly) the last, involves the 'generation' of ethically educative discourse.³²³ The speech just cited may be taken as the kind of discourse (or, at least, *one* of the

³²⁰ The analogy between the guide-lover relationship and the Diotima-Socrates relationship is signalled in *Smp.* 210–11, esp. 210a3–4 and 6–7, e1–6, 211d1–8.

³²¹ The 'possession' (*κτήμα*) is the understanding of the Form of Beauty described as a 'godlike' experience in 212a; esp. 6–7; tr. of b3–4 follows Dover (1980), 159, note on 212b3.

³²² For different ways of understanding the other-directed consequences of the ascent, see e.g. Irwin, 5.2 above, text to n. 21, and Price, text to nn. 300–1, 305 above.

³²³ See n. 299 above.

kinds of discourse)³²⁴ generated by the completion of the final stage. It is a discourse directed towards other people—not just the loved one—urging them to seek to live the same mode of (shared human) life as the lover.

The principal point of comparison which I see between the mysteries of Diotima, as thus interpreted, and Aristotle *NE* 10. 7–8 is this. Both passages acknowledge, in different ways, the gap between the ideal standardly promoted by interpersonal and communal discourse and that based on reflective debate. Both passages also convey the thought that this gap should be closed by the adoption as the shaping goal of one's life of the ideal based on post-reflective understanding.³²⁵ From a modern perspective, there are reasons for seeing the post-reflective ideal as an egoistic option, and for seeking to show that it can be accommodated to the demands of an altruism-centred framework.³²⁶ But the Platonic passage, as well as the Aristotelian, can be seen as expressing the thought that the propagation of the post-reflective ideal is the greatest benefit that one can confer on others, and that post-reflective understanding generates the wish to propagate the best possible mode of human (or 'divine') life.³²⁷ The Platonic passage is less explicit than the Aristotelian in advocating a specifically philosophical life (though that is, probably, the context envisaged for the ascent).³²⁸ But both passages seem clearly to convey the point that the key determinant of the pursuit of happiness should be the outcome of reflective debate, whether or not happiness is actually identified with philosophical reflection. The mysteries of Diotima, unlike *NE* 10. 7–8 (and Plato's *Republic*), do not emphasize the point that the development of pre-reflective virtue is a prerequisite for the proper under-

³²⁴ It is clear from *Smp.* 211d2–8 and 212a3–7 that this stage also generates a distinctive form of intrapsychic and interpersonal discourse as well as the reflective-educational discourse exemplified in the 'mysteries' themselves.

³²⁵ On *NE* 10. 7–8, see 5.6 above, esp. text to nn. 275–91.

³²⁶ This motive can be taken as underlying, e.g. Irwin's version of the 'inclusive' interpretation (text to n. 295 above), while Price's interpretation provides (what I see as) a more conceptually appropriate way of responding to this wish: see text to nn. 296–7 above.

³²⁷ On the pattern involved, see above 5.3, text to nn. 86–9; also 4.7, text to nn. 286–9.

³²⁸ In principle, the ascent could be conceived as occurring in *any* (properly conducted) triangular relationship; but that of guided philosophical progress is much the most likely pattern: see *φιλοσοφία* in 210d6; on the parallels with the (explicitly philosophical) guidance out of the cave towards the light in *R.* see n. 317 above; and, on the pattern of *Phdr.*, see n. 313 above.

standing of post-reflective virtue; nor do they emphasize the related tension between the claims of these two conceptions of virtue. The stress is rather on the gap between the conventional and the post-reflective understanding of what 'love' at its deepest consists in, and on the radical way in which the recognition of this can reshape one's psycho-ethical structure and pattern of interpersonal relationships.³²⁹

I think that the same general line of interpretation can provide the resolution of a problem that arises in Epicurean theory, and one that is analogous to that generated by *NE* 10. 7–8 and the mysteries of Diotima. This also centres on the relationship between pursuing one's own happiness and meeting the ethical claims of others. In Epicureanism, this issue takes the form of the conflict between the claims of friendship and the pursuit of pleasure (understood as freedom from distress, *ataraxia*, and freedom from pain, *aponia*) which is taken to be the overall goal of an Epicurean life. On the one hand, it is Epicurean teaching that 'it is necessary to take risks [*παρὰ κινδυνεύσαι*] for the sake of friendship'; and the Epicurean wise person 'will never give up a friend' and 'will on occasion die for a friend'.³³⁰ On the other hand, Epicurus stresses the idea that the virtues (including those, presumably, expressed in friendship) should be regarded as instrumental means to realize the overall goal (pleasure) and that you should 'refer each of your actions on every occasion to nature's end' (that is, to the achievement of pleasure).³³¹ There is evidence that later Epicureans saw this as a potential problem and tried to resolve it in various ways.³³² Epicurus' own position on this question seems to be this. Considered over a lifetime, friendship does help to further Epicurean objectives: it provides both a guarantee of security from danger and anxiety and a positive source of 'joy'.³³³ But this will be the case only if the

³²⁹ On this tension in *NE* 10. 7–8, see 5.6 above, text to nn. 255–62, including refs. to *R.* 519–20 in n. 261. To this extent, the post-reflective appeal is directed at *anyone* (on this, as characteristic of the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues, see *Pl. Ap.* 21b–23b, *Grg.* 486d–488b, and Williams (1985), 1, 23–31). Contrast the more directed appeal of *Arist. NE.* and *R.* 2–10; see 4.4 above, text to nn. 106–19; 6.6 below, text to nn. 174–94. However, Alcibiades' speech, esp. *Smp.* 215e–216b, signals Plato's awareness here too that not *everyone* so addressed will be ethically or philosophically capable of responding to this appeal.

³³⁰ *LS* 22F(2), Q(5) and (6); also G, H.

³³¹ *LS* 21E(2); see also 5.2 above, text to nn. 39–41, and n. 353 below.

³³² See n. 39 above.

³³³ See *LS* 22E, F, I, O(3).

friendship itself is (in a sense to be discussed shortly) 'real' friendship. This point is made in a passage that is generally taken as expressing Epicurus' own position:

Without friendship, we are quite unable to secure a joy in life which is steady and lasting, nor can we preserve friendship itself unless we love our friends as much as ourselves. Therefore friendship involves *both* this latter element [mutual love] *and* the link with pleasure. For we rejoice in our friend's joy as much as in our own and we are equally pained by their distress.³³⁴

A friendship of this type will, over time, help the partners in friendship to live the kind of life that promotes their pleasure and diminishes their pain. But it will only do so if it is one in which 'we love our friends as much as ourselves' and are thus willing to undergo the localized episodes of pain and risk-taking on our friends' behalf that this may involve.

This line of interpretation has been developed by several recent discussions in a way that is largely convincing.³³⁵ But I think that this interpretation could be strengthened by underlining two further points. One relates to the question of the ethical framework in which we define the precise nature of the problem and of the possible forms of resolution (including the way in which we define a 'real' friendship). For Phillip Mitsis, for instance, the issue turns on the conflict between the egoistic overall goal of Epicureanism (pursuing one's own pleasure) and the altruistic attitude that Epicurus sometimes adopts in discussing friendship. Couched in these terms, the issue is, perhaps, as Mitsis suggests, ultimately insoluble.³³⁶ However, the issue appears rather different in the light of the ethical framework outlined earlier (5.3 above). The discussion of Aristotle's model of friendship may indicate the ideal which Epicurus has in mind: not that of self-negating altruism but the kind of shared life whose maintenance may make great, even extreme, demands on each partner, but which is still conceived as being (overall) pleasurable, beneficial, and as constituting a key part of the good life for both partners. As in Aristotle, the theme of the shared life coexists,

³³⁴ Cic. *Fin.* 1.67 (=LS 22O(3)) tr. as in LS with additions and italics in rendering this sentence: *idcirco et hoc ipsum efficitur in amicitia et amicitia cum voluptate conectitur.*

³³⁵ See Long (1986), 303–5; and, in a more qualified form, Mitsis (1988), ch. 3, esp. 98–104, 112–17; Annas (1993), 239–40.

³³⁶ Mitsis (1988), 123–8.

even in the case of close friendship, with that of reciprocal exchange,³³⁷ a point highlighted in this passage: 'One who is always looking for help is not a friend, nor is one who never associates help with friendship. For the former trades sentiment for recompense,³³⁸ while the latter cuts off confident expectation in regard to the future', LS 22F(4). There is a presumption that friendship will be mutually beneficial rather than providing a context for a self-negating altruism. What is required is that the friend engages in the reciprocal exchanges of friendship in the right way and with the right attitudes; these exclude *both* excessive self-reliance *and* the commercialization of the relationship.

However, there is a further point that is more important in the present context. This is that the Epicurean characterization of what should count as 'real' friendship is informed by the distinctively Epicurean conception of the highest possible human happiness, namely, pleasure.³³⁹ In an Aristotelian ideal friendship each friend wishes good for the other as a virtuous person (for what he is 'in himself'); but the Epicurean wise man 'will take the same trouble [*labores . . . eosdem suscipiet*] for his friend's pleasure [*voluptatem*] as he would for his own'.³⁴⁰ The characterization of the friendship involved embodies the typically Epicurean thought that the pursuit of pleasure is not just a process of maximizing localized episodes of pleasure, but one of shaping one's life as a whole (and thus making it unified and 'complete', whatever its length), by modifying one's desires to match what human nature really requires.³⁴¹ Friendship (provided that it is 'real' friendship, of a close, mutually benefiting kind) can play a crucial role in creating the stable expectation of future pleasure, and the memories of past pleasure, that give human

³³⁷ See 5.4 above, text to nn. 114–19, 130–39; cf. LS 22O(3), cited in text to n. 334 above, with the characterization of the shared life in refs. in n. 113 above.

³³⁸ Such a person 'commercializes' the relationship, substituting (quasi-commercial) 'exchange' (*amoibe*) for the (voluntary) exchange of favours (*charis*). For relevant background, see 2.6 above, text to nn. 140–6.

³³⁹ On the importance of placing Epicurean 'hedonism' in the context of Greek philosophical theorizing about happiness (*eudaimonia*), and of seeing their conception of pleasure as that of a (credibly) complete and life-shaping goal, see Annas (1987), 5–8, and (1993), 334; see also text to n. 341 below.

³⁴⁰ See 5.4 above, text to nn. 124–9; and Cic. *Fin.* 1. 68 (=LS 22O(3)), tr. mine, continuation of passage cited in text to n. 334 above.

³⁴¹ On this conception of the pursuit of pleasure, see LS 21B, E, F, H, I; on the 'complete life' (*τὸν παντὲς ἡ βίον*) see LS 24C. See further Mitsis (1988), ch. 1; Annas (1993), ch. 16.

life this unified and stable character.³⁴² Relatedly, despite the value that friends thus have for us, our response to their death should reflect the Epicurean thought that (when the 'complete' life comes to an end) 'death is nothing to us'.³⁴³ Hence, we should express our fellow-feeling [συμπαθῶμεν] for friends not by mourning for them [θρηνουῦντες] but by thinking about them [φροντίζοντες], thus perpetuating the kind of pleasure that makes friendship 'an immortal good'.³⁴⁴

This point is important here because it brings out the analogy which I wish to draw with Aristotle *NE* 10. 7–8. In those chapters, in my interpretation, the conflict between the Aristotelian ideal (the contemplative life) and the standard ethical ideal (that of the practical life, including other-benefiting actions) is resolved by the thought that the practical direction of life should be informed by the recognition that the contemplative life represents the highest possible mode of human happiness, and that this recognition can benefit others as well as oneself (5.6 above). Similarly, in Epicurean thought, the conflict between the overall good, that of pursuing one's own pleasure, and meeting the claims of friendship, acknowledged to be legitimate, is resolved not only by the type of friendship involved, that is, 'real' (genuinely mutually beneficial) friendship.³⁴⁵ It is also resolved by the fact that the lives of the friends involved are, ideally, shaped by the realization that pleasure (understood in Epicurean terms) represents the highest human happiness; and it is perhaps only in such a case that this conflict is fully resolved. The friendship of such people is grounded above all in the awareness that they are helping each other to lead *Epicurean* lives, and that promoting this end is the greatest benefit that friends can provide for each other as well as for themselves.³⁴⁶ In other words, seeking

³⁴² See esp. Cic. *Fin.* 1.67 (=LS 220(3)): 'friendships are creators of pleasures, as well as their most reliable protectors, for friends and for ourselves alike. The pleasures they enjoy are not only of the present, but they are also elated by the hope of the near and distant future. Without friendship we are quite unable to secure a joy in life which is steady and lasting . . .' (tr. as in LS); see also LS 24D. Some Aristotelian texts also identify shared pleasures and pains as a mark of friendship (e.g. *NE* 1166a7–8, *Rh.* 1381a4–5) but do not give this idea the same emphasis and significance that we find in Cic. *Fin.* 1. 66–8 (=LS 220(2–3)).

³⁴³ See Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus* 124–5, Lucretius (*Lucr.*) 3. 830 (see LS 24E) and Furley (1986); also Cic. *Fin.* 1. 68, final sentence.

³⁴⁴ LS 22F(6) and (7), also 22C(2) and 24D.

³⁴⁵ See text to nn. 336–8 above.

³⁴⁶ I take it that the Epicurean norm is that of leading a *deliberately* Epicurean life, i.e. one consciously modelled on the founder; hence the quasi-godlike status of

pleasure is something that *we* should do, as human beings pursuing the best possible human good, and that we should do in a way that shapes every aspect of our interpersonal as well as intrapsychic life.³⁴⁷ Thus, the outcome of reflective debate of the Epicurean type is not simply to create tension with conventional normative thinking about the ethical claims of friendship but also, as in the Aristotelian and Platonic cases, to resolve this by informing the interactive dialogue of friendship.³⁴⁸ This mode of resolution is not couched, in Epicurean thought, in terms of 'self-realization' (or of what 'each of us is'); but, as in the Aristotelian and Platonic cases, it involves thinking about our fundamental nature as human beings and about the life-shaping goals which follow from this.³⁴⁹

I want also to suggest (though only in general terms) that a similar line of thought could be used to resolve a related conflict in Epicurean thinking, which Julia Annas has emphasized, concerning the relationship between the valuation of virtue and the pursuit of the overall goal of pleasure.³⁵⁰ On the one hand, Epicurus presents the virtues as inseparable from the life of pleasure, and entailed by it; one might infer from this that the virtues, thus given this special status, are valued and practised for their own sake.³⁵¹ On the other hand, Epicurus also insists, with great emphasis, that the virtues are desirable only instrumentally, as a means to realize the overall goal of pleasure.³⁵² As Annas points out, Epicurus rules out any move to resolve this conflict by a 'two-level' theory, according to which, at

Epicurus, and the 'missionary' character of the school (on which see Frischer (1982)), though, in theory, the same point would apply to anyone who (pre-reflectively) leads a life in line with Epicurean principles.

³⁴⁷ For this way of formulating the Greek ethical ideal, see 5.3, text to nn. 86–95.

³⁴⁸ On the general similarities and differences between the patterns of ethical thinking involved in these theories, see above, 5.3, text to nn. 87–95, and text to n. 292 above.

³⁴⁹ On later Hellenistic and Roman versions (including Epicurean ones) of the idea of 'being yourself' as an ethical claim, though one that is no more subjective-individualist in character than the theories discussed here, see Gill (1993a), (1994).

³⁵⁰ The link between the two issues (on friendship and on virtue) is emphasized in Cic. *Fin.* 1. 66, 68.

³⁵¹ DL 10. 138, Epicurus, *Key Doctrines* 5, Cic. *Fin.* 1. 57, LS 21B(6). The condition of being practised 'for its own sake' is a standard part of Aristotle's definition of virtue (e.g. *NE* 1105^a32), though it is not, as far as I am aware, ever specified by Epicurus.

³⁵² LS 21O, P, DL 10. 138. This signals a move away from the position found, in different forms, in Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, according to which the virtues are valued both in themselves and as realizing happiness because they are, in substance, *constitutive* of happiness.

the practical level, we act virtuously for its own sake but, at the reflective level, we recognize that virtuous action is only instrumental to achieving pleasure, by insisting that you must 'refer each of your actions on every occasion to nature's end', that is, pleasure.³⁵³ Here, as in Aristotle, we need to accept that Epicureanism is, essentially, a 'one-level' ethical theory, in the sense that it demands that practical life and motivation should be shaped by the outcome of reflective debate. The virtues should be practised, and in a committed, consistent way.³⁵⁴ But the understanding of what the virtues are, and how they should be practised, should be informed by the Epicurean conception of the overall goal of a human life rather than by the understanding of them which is embodied in the action-guiding dialogue of conventional interpersonal and communal discourse. In other words, it is the *Epicurean* virtues that should be practised, though to say this is not to deny that they are, in this context, 'real' virtues, and that they have a special status in the pursuit of Epicurean objectives.³⁵⁵

That this is, indeed, Epicurus' position on the relationship between pleasure and the virtues is indicated by a number of ancient texts, though not, I think, explicated in quite this form. In the main Ciceronian discussion of this topic (*Fin.* 1. 42–54), we find, for instance, the ideas (1) that courage is promoted by some specifically Epicurean beliefs (such as that 'death is nothing to us') and (2) that courage, once achieved, can promote peace of mind and, thus, 'pleasure', in this sense.³⁵⁶ More emphatically, Lucretius' *On the Nature of the Universe* brings out the point, especially in its eulogies of Epicurus himself, that the nature of the virtues (including courage, benefaction, and piety) are substantively revised by Epicurean teaching, and are in direct conflict with the understanding of the virtues

³⁵³ LS 21E(2) (=Key Doctrines 25); Annas (1987), 15, (1993), 240–1, 342–3. For criticism of modern two-level ethical theories, see Williams (1985), ch. 6, esp. 108–10.

³⁵⁴ i.e. they are not practised only when they (as distinct from some non-virtuous actions) present the most effective way of achieving pleasures.

³⁵⁵ Mitsis (1988), ch. 2 and Annas (1993), 342–50 also see the Epicurean programme for the pursuit of pleasure as accommodating 'real' virtues, but stress less than I do the thought that they must be *Epicurean* virtues.

³⁵⁶ Cic. *Fin.* 1. 49, refs. in n. 343 above, and DL 10. 120; also Mitsis, (1988), 71–2, and, on moderation (*sophrosune*), Mitsis, 74. Cic. *Fin.* 1. 42–54, perhaps for apologetic reasons, does not stress this point; but this account, together with relevant criticisms in *Fin.* 2. 45–54, 60–73, can be taken as supporting this interpretation of the Epicurean theory. See further Mitsis (1988), 69–76.

current in conventional Greco-Roman life.³⁵⁷ Thus, Epicurean teachings both clarify the 'real' nature of the virtues, and show how those virtues, if practised wholeheartedly, will serve as a means of realizing the overall objectives (peace of mind and absence of pain) whose overriding value is shown by those teachings. A similar point seems to underlie Epicurus' (complex) views on justice. In conventional societies, justice is needed as a 'guarantee of utility' (*σύμβολον τοῦ συμφέροντος*) to enable co-operative association and to prevent the mutual damage that would otherwise occur because of people's (socially promoted) false ideas about what is genuinely desirable.³⁵⁸ But, in a society shaped by Epicurean ethical teaching, co-operative behaviour would be the result of a recognition of what is genuinely desirable (especially, of *how little* is needed to achieve pleasure) as well as of the positive value of friendship. In such a society, 'everything will be full of justice and mutual friendship [*φιλανθρωπίας*], and there will be no need of city walls or laws . . .'³⁵⁹ Thus, in the case of this virtue also, Epicurean teaching shows how a post-reflective understanding of the nature of the highest human happiness leads to the revision of the virtue in a way that can, in principle, reshape communal and interpersonal as well as intrapsychic life.

I close this chapter by considering briefly the Stoic move of claiming that human beings are naturally disposed to develop the motivation to benefit *anyone*, whether or not the person benefited is otherwise associated with oneself.³⁶⁰ This move is not, clearly, problematic in the same way as the other theories discussed in this and the preceding section, in that the pursuit of the highest available form of human happiness (through the completion of human development or *oikeiosis*) is taken to result in the desire to benefit others. However, this claim raises similar issues, in other respects, to those considered in the other theories. The question arises whether this claim is the outcome of post-reflective understanding of what virtue involves (as in the type of thinking represented by the mysteries of Diotima and Epicurean theory) or of post-reflective

³⁵⁷ Lucr. 1. 62–79 ('courage', *virtus*); 5. 13–54 (heroic benefaction), 5. 1194–203, taken with 1.80–101 (piety).

³⁵⁸ LS 22A esp. (1), B, K, L (6)–(7), M, R, taken with LS, vol. 1, 134–6.

³⁵⁹ LS 22S, taken with commentary in LS, vol. 2, 143; see further Mitsis (1988), 79–97, esp. 91–2.

³⁶⁰ See LS 57F, G, 67K, L; for interpretation, see above 5.2, text to n. 49; 5.5, text to nn. 226–30. On the question how far this move represents a radical departure from the general form of Greek ethical thought, see Gill (1998a), 325–7.

modification of pre-reflective understanding (as in the type of thinking represented by NE 10. 7–8).³⁶¹

This question is not easy to answer unequivocally because Stoicism, during its long history as a creative philosophical movement, consisted of various, partly competing, strands; and different answers are appropriate for different strands. Thus, for instance, Zeno's assertion that 'we should regard all men as our fellow-citizens and local residents' forms one of the key theses of a work, the *Republic*, based on the radical rejection of conventional political and social structures as vehicles for the kind of ethical life validated by reflection.³⁶² This claim is comparable with the position expressed in Diotima's mysteries and Epicurus, that the only ethically valid type of interpersonal life is that which is shaped by post-reflective understanding. Cicero, by contrast, draws on a different strand of thinking, going back to Panaetius and, possibly, Chrysippus, according to which the principles of Stoic ethical and political theory are compatible with the best practices of the best existing communities. The formulations in 'On Duties' and 'On Ends' of the idea that human beings are naturally disposed to benefit *anyone* reflect this strand of thinking. The dominant thought is that the generalized benefaction of the Stoic claim represents an intensification of the communal relationships promoted by the best forms of conventional states.³⁶³ Couched in terms of individual ethical development, the motivation towards generalized benefiting of others represents the outcome of pre-reflective development of virtue through engagement in the relationships of a well-ordered community, modified by the post-theoretical recognition that such generalized benefiting is a function of human nature.³⁶⁴ This line of thought is closer to the

³⁶¹ For the contrasting strands of Greek theory, see 5.3 above, text to nn. 87, 95–6. In the light of modern ethical thought, an obvious alternative would be to take the Stoic position as a post-theoretical ratification of conventional valuation of generalized other-benefiting (cf. Kant's theory, 5.3 above, text to nn. 60–1, 69). But, if my claims in 5.3 above, text to nn. 78–86 are accepted, this will not be a plausible suggestion. In any case, the Stoic position on this was clearly regarded as innovative in Antiquity; see Annas (1993), 265–7, 270–1.

³⁶² See LS 67A(1), tr. as in LS, and 67B–G. On Zeno's place in the history of Stoic political theory, see LS, vol. 1, 434–7, and Schofield (1991), ch. 1.

³⁶³ See esp. LS 57F(2–3), tr. as in LS (= Cic. *Fin.* 3. 63–4): 'We are therefore by nature suited to form unions, societies, and states. The Stoics hold that the world . . . is as it were a city and state shared by men and gods . . . From this it is a natural consequence that we prefer the common advantage to our own . . .' See also *Off.* 1. 51–8.

³⁶⁴ See 5.5 above, text to nn. 229–30; and Gill (1990c), 148–51.

approach of Aristotle NE 10. 7–8, as described here, in which post-reflective ethical understanding is taken to depend on, as well as to be capable of revising, pre-theoretical virtue conventionally developed.

Despite the differences noted between the types of ethical thinking considered in these two sections, I think that the discussion of both types of Greek thought illustrates my main point in this chapter. This is that the kind of ethical theory involved is more appropriately interpreted as expressing an objective-participant framework of thinking about the person than the framework exemplified by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, which combines a focus on the individual self or subject with a type of ethical objectivism. Whatever the precise response of the Greek theory to the central issue considered here (that of the relationship between pursuing one's own happiness and meeting the ethical claims of others), it seems to be better analysed in terms of the attempt to determine the best possible form of human life than in terms of self-realization. This attempt is conceived in the form of the interplay between two modes of participation (in the interactive exchange and in reflective debate) rather than that of the kind of individual, self-related reflection that is presupposed by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen.³⁶⁵ This attempt is sometimes conceived in the form of the interplay between the three forms of dialogue associated with the image of the self in dialogue that I am taking as a key symbol for the objective-participant conception of person.³⁶⁶ The issues that figure recurrently in the theories (above all, those centred on the relationship between pre-reflective and post-reflective virtue) are most appropriately characterized in terms of the relationship between these various types of dialogue. Although I share with Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen the assumption that the theories involved are objectivist in their conception of psycho-ethical norms, I take it that the Greek understanding of the objectivism involved is integrally linked with their thinking about these types of participation. These and related points concerning these two conceptions of the person are developed more fully in the more discursive concluding chapter.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ See above 5.2, text to nn. 12–33, 42–50; 5.5, text to nn. 235–7.

³⁶⁶ See text to nn. 312–20 above.

³⁶⁷ See below 6.4–5; 6.7, text to nn. 231–43.

6

Being a Person and Being Human

6.1 PRELIMINARIES

In this final chapter, I take up a topic which enables me to examine in a more general way the contrast between subjective-individualist and objective-participant conceptions of personality, and to clarify the way in which this contrast has informed the more specific discussion in previous chapters. This topic also provides a way of pursuing the question of the relationship between Greek and modern thinking, which has formed a fundamental element in my argument from the start of the book. In addition, it serves as a means of highlighting other questions that could be pursued usefully in the light of the conceptual and interpretative framework developed here.

This topic is the question of the relationship between Greek philosophical thinking about what it means to be human, divine, or 'what each of us is', and modern philosophical thinking about what it means to be a 'person', in a normative sense. I draw especially on the detailed treatment of Platonic and Aristotelian thinking in Chapters 4 and 5. But, as elsewhere, I also refer to Stoic and Epicurean ideas, and seek to situate the Greek philosophical theories against the background of the poetic thinking discussed earlier in the book. In the Introduction (text to nn. 34–5) I took certain leading modern ideas about personhood as expressing key features of the subjective-individualist conception of personality. This suggests (what could be argued for independently) that the modern concept of 'person', in its normative, semi-technical, sense, is especially—though not exclusively—linked with the subjective and individualist strands in modern philosophy since Descartes. However, the concept of 'person', arguably, belongs to a general category which is not necessarily limited to subjective and individualist thinking. This category, put very broadly, is that of normative concepts which are taken to be grounded on facts of nature and which, by being so grounded, can legitimate, supplement, or revise, conventional ethical norms. Greek philosophical ideas about what it means to be 'human', 'divine' (in

the way that human beings can be), or 'what each of us is', can also be placed in this general category. There is, thus, a *prima facie* basis for comparing and contrasting Greek philosophical ideas of this kind with modern ideas about personhood.¹

I focus on certain salient points of contrast between the subjective or individualist strands in modern thinking about personhood and Greek thinking about normative concepts. This focus enables me to develop my central claim in this book that it is by counteracting such aspects of our own thinking (and by identifying the contrastingly objective and participant character of Greek thinking) that we can best understand Greek thinking about (what we call) 'personality'.² I consider two aspects of this contrast, relating, first, to the *criteria* of the relevant type of normative concept (6.2–3) and, second, to the *methodology* employed in determining and applying such concepts (6.4–5). I isolate two criteria of personhood which are prominent in modern thinking: the possession of a 'first-personal' ('I'-centred) viewpoint (6.2) and the capacity for 'second-order' desires (6.3), and I give more attention to the latter as being more fully comparable with the Greek material. I match the latter criterion against those implied in the philosophical theories discussed in Chapters 4–5, suggesting that this comparison helps us to define, by contrast, the objective-participant (particularly, the objectivist-participant)³ character of Greek thinking on these concepts.

A similar general point emerges from the discussion of the methodology of determining and applying normative concepts (6.4–5). There has been much debate about this in recent philosophy, some of which derives from criticism of (what I should call) 'subjective-individualist' ways of defining personhood. I take certain Greek philosophical treatments of normative concepts, discussed earlier in the book, as exemplifying a contrastingly objective-participant (and objectivist-participant) methodology. I bring out the significance of the fact that Greek theories stress, in various ways, *both* that the development of ethical dispositions through interpersonal and communal participation is a prerequisite for valid definition of these concepts *and* that (properly conducted) reflective

¹ See also 6.2 below, text to nn. 5–19.

² See *Introd.*, text to n. 29, and 6.7 below, text to nn. 198–9.

³ i.e. the linkage between forms of (interactive and reflective) participation and the achievement of objective understanding. See further *Introd.*, text to n. 30, and 6.4 below, text to nn. 88–90.

debate on these concepts can make an independent contribution to ethical life. I suggest that it is essential to take account of this type of methodology in interpreting what Greek philosophers mean when they present normative ideas, such as being 'human' or 'divine', as grounded in nature. The ethical objectivism (or, in one sense, 'naturalism') expressed in such claims needs to be taken in conjunction with the stress on the (interlinked) role of interactive and reflective participation in gaining a proper understanding of the ethical significance of these norms. I argue that both MacIntyre and Williams understate, in different ways, the importance of these forms of participation as preconditions of objective understanding of normative concepts. I suggest, in particular, that we need to qualify their accounts of Aristotle's conception of human nature in this respect and, perhaps, their views on the difference between Greek and modern thinking about normative concepts of this type.⁴

I also pursue a further implication of Greek philosophical thinking on this topic (6.6). This is that, although it may be, at some level, an essential capacity of all human beings to understand what it means to be normatively 'human', and to express this in their lives and character, this understanding depends on effective participation in the appropriate kinds of interactive and reflective discourse. It follows that, as a matter of fact, some human beings will be prevented from gaining this understanding because of the limited extent, or way, in which they have participated in dialogue of the appropriate kind. I contrast this idea with one sometimes found in modern thinking, according to which all human beings (or 'persons'), as such, are held responsible, as individuals, for becoming the people that they become. I suggest that this latter idea, particularly in its Kantian or post-Kantian form, has influenced some modern readings of, for instance, Plato's thinking on this subject. I offer a reading of a passage at the close of Book 9 of the *Republic* which I take as reflecting my view, and which indicates how other relevant passages in Greek philosophy might be understood.

At the close of the chapter (6.7), I discuss in more general terms the status and implications of the contrast drawn in this book between subjective-individualist and objective-participant concep-

⁴ See 6.5 below. Relatedly, I suggest that the Greek emphasis on the importance of (interactive and reflective) participation is paralleled in many (though not all) respects in Wiggins's account of the proper methodology of personhood. See 6.4 below, text to nn. 78–80, 86–8.

tions of personality. I stress that this contrast is designed to fulfil a relatively specific function in the history of ideas: to enable us (from our cultural-historical perspective) to gain a better understanding of Greek thinking about (what we call) 'personality'. To put the point differently, this contrast is designed to advance three kinds of dialogue: between Greek and modern thought, between Greek poetic and philosophical thought, and between different aspects of the objective-participant conception. I discuss two important themes in the book (recurring in different chapters) which illustrate the interplay between these types of dialogue, and outline the implications of this book for understanding the relationship between Greek and modern thinking and for the comparative study of concepts.

6.2 CRITERIA OF PERSONHOOD (1): SUBJECTIVITY

I take up, first, the question how far it is valid to compare, in principle, Greek thinking about normative concepts with modern theorizing about 'persons', in a strong sense. In this case, I think that we can claim rather more than Steven Lukes does in a relevant essay: namely, that this concept is so essential a function of our conceptual framework that we must, necessarily, use it as a 'bridgehead' in communicating with the ideas of another culture.⁵ Although there are special difficulties, as I explain later, in determining the precise conceptual status of the idea of 'person' in modern philosophy,⁶ I think that the general characterization of the idea offered earlier holds good. This is that the concept of 'person' belongs to the class of normative concepts which are taken to be grounded on facts of nature and, by being so grounded, to be able to legitimate, supplement, or revise, conventional ethical norms. I also think that Greek philosophical ideas about normative concepts can reasonably be put in this same general class, and that, to this degree, we have the basis of comparison between the two kinds of concepts.

In the introduction to a volume centred on this question (the relationship between modern concepts of personhood and ancient thinking about normative psychological and ethical concepts), I argued that some stronger claims could be made about this relationship. I suggested, for instance, that we could compare the Greek

⁵ Lukes (1985), 297–8.

⁶ On current debate about this, see 6.4 below, text to nn. 72–7.

move of defining *essentially* human characteristics (such as rationality) and an essential *part* or *function* of human psychology (such as, the rational part) with the modern move of defining what makes us a 'person' or bearer of 'personal identity'. Relatedly, I suggested that we could distinguish two comparable types of answer to this question, as so formulated, in ancient and modern philosophy. One is that our essential character (personhood or personal identity) is inseparable from our complex, psychophysical nature as human animals. The other is that this essential character is separable from our psychophysical nature; it may be a psychological feature (such as rationality in some form) that is shared with other kinds of being, such as gods or non-human animals.⁷

In responding to this suggestion, Alasdair MacIntyre and C. C. W. Taylor have argued, in partly similar terms, that my account of the position fails to acknowledge two relevant differences between Greek and modern thinking. One, stressed by MacIntyre, is that the contemporary thought-world gives scope for a conception of the human being which is more metaphysically and morally devalued than any found in ancient thought. Hence, the modern distinction between our status as persons and as human animals can be sharper and more radical than the ancient distinction between essentially and non-essentially human characteristics.⁸ The other is that, in modern but not ancient thought, the essential or normative characteristics are typically defined by reference to the (post-Cartesian, Lockean) idea of a self-conscious self or subject (an 'I'). In modern theories which distinguish our identity as persons from our nature as human animals, we thus encounter a kind of dualism which is differently conceived from ancient forms of dualism (such as that of Plato's *Phaedo* or, possibly, Aristotle *NE* 10. 7–8) which are not conceived in this form.⁹

It is the second criticism on which I dwell here. I do not accept that this invalidates the whole project of comparing modern ideas of personhood and Greek normative concepts. But I accept that this

⁷ Gill (1990d), 7–10, 17.

⁸ MacIntyre (1991), 188–92; on the issues raised here, see further below 6.5, esp. text to nn. 137–44; and 6.7, text to nn. 249–50.

⁹ C. C. W. Taylor (1992), 65–6, 69–71. Pl. *Phd.* combines psyche–body dualism with reason–emotion/desire dualism, associating reason with the psyche and emotion/desire with the body (see e.g. 64c–67b, 80a–83b). The 'dualism' (if it is rightly so described) of Arist. *NE* 10. 7–8 is that between theoretical and practical reason: see 5.6 above, text to nn. 278–85.

emphasizes a factor which bears crucially on the execution of this project. Indeed, this criticism corresponds to a theme which has been prominent from an early stage in the present book: that the Cartesian move of presenting the (self-conscious, unitary) 'I' as, in some sense, fundamental and primary, has had a profound effect in shaping much modern thinking about personhood.¹⁰ The 'I' can, in this type of theorizing, be conceived simply as the 'subject', in the sense of the (more or less unified) locus of psychological experience (such as perception and memory) and self-consciousness.¹¹ But it can also be conceived, in stronger form, as the locus of a unique, 'first-personal' viewpoint. The latter viewpoint can be defined in relatively narrow terms, for instance, as 'indexicality', the consciousness that 'I am this person here now.'¹² But this viewpoint can also be defined more broadly, as it is by Thomas Nagel or Richard Wollheim, for instance, as one that informs not only psychological functions such as memory but also ethical judgements and one's larger understanding of oneself and the world.¹³ Whether it is defined narrowly or broadly, I think that it is difficult to claim that the subjective or first-personal viewpoint plays the same key role in Greek definitions of essential or normative human status as it does in much (though not all) modern thought.¹⁴

In considering this question, it is important to keep two ideas distinct. One is the claim that it is possible to find (at least partial) analogues of modern conceptions of (self)-consciousness and subjectivity in Greek thought. The other is the claim that the analogue in question is presented in Greek thought as the key defining characteristic of normative status. It is not implausible to suggest that we can find, for instance, in Aristotelian or Stoic psychology, partial equivalents for the modern idea of self-consciousness.¹⁵ What is

¹⁰ 1.1 above, text to nn. 17–23; see further Rorty (1976), 11–14.

¹¹ See e.g. Lowe (1991), 102–4; the centrality given to the notion of 'subject' in his account is the more striking in his discussion since he also adopts an 'Aristotelian' conception of persons and substances, 87–9, 107, as well as a non-Cartesian view of the mind–body relationship, 105–6.

¹² On the essential role of ('I-centred') indexicality in a proper analysis of personhood, see Morton (1990); see also 6.3 below, text to n. 61.

¹³ See Nagel (1986), esp. chs. 8–11; Wollheim (1984), esp. chs. 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7.

¹⁴ For modern theories for which this viewpoint is not important, see refs. in n. 18 below.

¹⁵ On 'the commonsense power in perception' (ἡ κοινὴ αἰσθησις) in Aristotle (*DA* 426^b8–427^a16) and later Greek thought, see Emilsson (1991), 149–54; on consciousness that one is perceiving (Arist. *Physics* 244^b6–245^a1), see Everson (1991a), 130–1.

much more difficult to sustain is the claim that this function is presented as constitutive of essentially (or normatively) human nature. When Aristotle or the Stoics offer characterizations of normatively human capacities, these are specified, typically, as rationality, language-use, and sociability (or some combination of these), rather than self-consciousness or any capacity that we can translate as 'subjectivity'.¹⁶ As argued later, capacities of the type outlined (taken separately or in combination) correspond to those which play a central role in the Greek philosophical accounts of full human ethical development discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.¹⁷ These considerations have led me to argue (as does Kathleen Wilkes, for instance) that Greek thinkers, like some contemporary ones, offer an 'objective' (in the sense of 'non-subject-centred') account of human psychology and of what is essential to this.¹⁸ It follows that, in Greek thought, even 'subjective' capacities, such as self-consciousness, need to be understood as part of a psychological framework conceived in 'objective' terms, rather than being conceived as fundamental to distinctively human psychology as they are in a post-Cartesian framework of thought.¹⁹

It is useful here to take note of a contrasting account of the relationship between Greek and modern thinking on this subject offered by Troels Engberg-Pedersen, based on his analysis of the Stoic theory of *oikeiosis*, discussed earlier. He takes the Stoic theory to be distinctive, among Greek theories, because of its 'subjective' approach, in the following sense. The theory, as he interprets it, gives a crucial role to the idea of the 'I', understood as a locus of indexicality and as a self-conscious subject. Although the capacity for self-awareness is explicitly noted only at the first stage (as one that is common to all animals), Engberg-Pedersen takes the process of ethical development to be conceived, crucially, as development in the understanding of oneself as 'I' or individual subject. The motivational weight in the process of development is carried by the fact that it is *oneself* (the 'I') that one comes to understand better, by learning

and refs. in his nn. 23, 25. On self-consciousness in Stoic psychology, see 5.5 above, nn. 213–15.

¹⁶ See 6.3 below, text to n. 44.

¹⁷ See 6.3 below, text to nn. 50–7.

¹⁸ See 1.2 above, esp. text to nn. 37–53.

¹⁹ For some suggestions about what this involves, see above 1.2, text to nn. 98–104; 1.4, text to nn. 197–202; 3.2, text to nn. 35–40.

to see oneself as progressively capable of, and disposed towards, rational selection, virtuous choice, and other-benefiting inclinations.²⁰

However, Engberg-Pedersen is very far from claiming that the Stoics, like some modern thinkers, regard the possession of a *radically* first-personal (in my terms 'subjective-individualist') viewpoint as an ineliminable part of human existence. Although the Stoics conceive the process of development as, in one sense, 'subjective' throughout (in that it is, crucially, the development in the viewpoint of an 'I', as individual subject), it is also seen, in another sense, as the development from a 'subjective' (immature and partial) understanding to an 'objective' (mature and well-grounded) one. Thus, by contrast with Nagel, for instance, the Stoics insist on the psychological possibility of developing from a subjective to an objective view (in this sense), while, at the same time, maintaining that the view achieved remains '*somebody's*' view and not a 'centreless' or 'God's eye' view.²¹ Engberg-Pedersen thinks that the Stoic theory can usefully be introduced into contemporary psychological and ethical debate. It can be taken as reinforcing a standard feature of the conception of 'person' in modern European philosophy (that of Kant, for instance), namely that a 'person' is someone who can modify all his beliefs and desires by rational reflection. It does so, in particular, by showing that a recognition of the nature of the human being as an individual 'I' or subject (though not as a locus of radical subjectivity) is compatible with a belief in moral objectivity (understood as the claims of impersonal morality), and in the psychological possibility of coming to recognize these claims as overriding.²²

Engberg-Pedersen's interpretation of the Stoic theory has in common with the one adopted in this book an emphasis on the ethical objectivism of the theory, though on a different understanding of how

²⁰ Engberg-Pedersen (1990a) in Gill (1990d); on his account of the Stoic theory, see above 5.2, text to nn. 42–50; 5.5, text to nn. 209–12.

²¹ Engberg-Pedersen (1990a), 117–26; see also his (1986), 162–71; (1990b), 32–5, 88–94, 104–9, 114–15, 126. For Nagel, by contrast, the 'subjective' and 'objective' viewpoints are both distinct and incompatible perspectives; the 'subjective' cannot be replaced by the 'objective', and remains an ineliminable aspect of everyone's world view: see e.g. Nagel (1986), 149, 151, 155 (cited in Engberg-Pedersen (1990a), 118). For Nagel, the 'objective' viewpoint signifies one which is 'impersonal' or 'detached' (a 'centreless' or 'God's eye' view) rather than one that is grounded on truth or knowledge (which is what it means for Engberg-Pedersen).

²² Engberg-Pedersen (1990a), 110–11, 127–8, 133–4.

this objectivism is to be conceived.²³ In other respects, however, I am sceptical both about the reading of the Stoic material and about the account offered of the relationship between ancient and modern thinking. As regards the Stoic texts, I have already noted the problem that the idea of self-consciousness is explicitly stated only at the first stage, and as a function shared with other animals. It is only by implication (and by his view of the underlying logic of the whole theory) that Engberg-Pedersen is enabled to claim that self-consciousness, in the sense of understanding oneself as an indexical 'I' and subject, is also central at the later stages in which the explicitly 'human' functions of rationality and sociability are introduced.²⁴ So I do not think that Stoic theory can play the role in current debate which Engberg-Pedersen allocates to it: that of reinforcing the Kantian conception of 'person' by showing that the idea of the moral agent as individual subject or 'I' need not lead to the radical subjective-individualism of Nagel and others.

My objection is not to the idea of juxtaposing ancient and modern debates, or to trying to establish 'dialogue' between ancient and modern philosophical concerns. As indicated in the Introduction (text to n. 49), I think that some such process is a valuable (and perhaps inescapable) part of any enquiry such as that undertaken in this book. My scepticism is focused on the idea that Stoic theory (or any other Greek philosophical formulation of normative human status) is grounded on the idea of the person as 'I', or individual subject, in the way that Engberg-Pedersen suggests. Also, in seeking to locate a conceptual alternative, as Engberg-Pedersen also does, to the radically subjective-individualist strand in modern thinking about personhood, I have emphasized non-subjective approaches in the contemporary philosophy of mind and 'participant' strands in ethical philosophy. Engberg-Pedersen, by contrast, outlines a position which combines a subjective psychological model with an individualist ethical model (while avoiding a radical subjectivist-individualist position and adopting a type of psycho-ethical objectivism).²⁵ I share his view that Stoic and other Greek

²³ See text to nn. 25–6 below.

²⁴ See 5.5 above, text to nn. 213–30.

²⁵ Engberg-Pedersen's account of the Stoic theory is psychologically 'subjective' in the sense that he gives a central role to the idea of the 'I' as individual subject, while also presenting the theory as 'objectivist' in the sense explained in text to nn. 21–2. He also endorses, by implication, a Kantian approach to ethical theory, i.e. (in my terms) an 'individualist' rather than 'participant' one. This difference between us partly

theories may be able to make a contribution, of a kind, to contemporary debate about the criteria of personhood and the methodology of this area of theory. But I base this view on the assumption that Stoic theory incorporates an 'objective-participant' conception of human nature, and that it should be compared with strands in contemporary thinking that are at least partly analogous in this respect.²⁶

In taking the view that I have about Greek theorizing about normative human status and subjectivity, I have been influenced by a well-known article by Myles Burnyeat (1982). Burnyeat's subject is the relationship between Greek and modern theories of knowledge (epistemology) and not that of normative concepts; but his discussion carries important implications for my topic. Burnyeat's central claim is that Descartes's sceptical strategy goes further than that of any ancient type of scepticism, in calling into question the very existence of the external world, as well as our ability to gain knowledge of this. Relatedly, Descartes's counter-move, that of arguing that the only secure basis of certain knowledge, namely that 'I' am a thinking thing (a self-conscious subject), cannot be paralleled in ancient thought either. More broadly, Burnyeat suggests that the familiar modern (post-Cartesian) contrast between an inner world of subjective experience (to which we have privileged, authoritative access) and an external, objective world has no real equivalent in ancient thought.²⁷ Even theories in which we might expect to find such a contrast, such as the 'Protagorean' relativism of the first part of Plato's *Theaetetus* (*Tht.*) or Pyrrhonian scepticism, are, in fact, 'realist' or 'objectivist' in assuming that what is at issue is our knowledge of the 'real' world, and not our access to a distinct zone of subjective experience.²⁸ A more recent discussion by Stephen Everson, though qualifying some of the terms in which Burnyeat frames this thesis, reinforces the main contrast drawn by Burnyeat

explains our different reading of Williams's philosophy. For Engberg-Pedersen, Williams is taken, like Nagel, as a representative of radical subjective-individualism (1990a, 112–17, 127–9), whereas I have stressed the 'participant' dimension of Williams's ethical thought, which is linked with his criticism of the 'impersonality' of Kantian ethical theory (e.g. 1.3 above, text to nn. 113–16, 120–5; 4.3, text to nn. 86–7). However, I have not denied the difference between his thinking and (e.g.) Platonic objectivism (4.5 above, text to nn. 162–8).

²⁶ See below, 6.4 and 6.5, text to nn. 123–9, 138–44.

²⁷ Burnyeat (1982), 39–50.

²⁸ Burnyeat (1982), 26–9, 36–9; on Pl. *Tht.*, see also n. 35 below.

between post-Cartesian theory and Greek scepticism (even in the most extreme versions of the latter).²⁹ Burnyeat's thesis, if accepted, helps to explain why Greek philosophical thinking about what it means to be normatively human, or 'what each of us is', is not (as I argue) centred on the idea of the individual 'I' or subject (or the idea of a uniquely 'first-personal' viewpoint) in the way that much modern theorizing about personhood is. There is lacking in Greek thought the conceptual framework and distinctions that would give the idea of the 'I' the kind of foundational role assumed in post-Cartesian thinking,³⁰ and it is partly for this reason that I am doubtful about the reading of the form and philosophical significance of Stoic theory offered by Engberg-Pedersen.

Burnyeat's discussion has the additional value for this study of suggesting a response to a possible line of criticism of my approach (I outline the criticism and the response only in the most general terms). The kernel of the criticism is that my claim that Greek philosophy expresses an objective-participant, rather than a subjective-individualist, conception of the person relies for its credibility on the fact that it focuses on a certain subdivision of Greek philosophers, namely Plato, Aristotle, and, to a lesser extent, Epicurus and the Stoics,³¹ and that a more comprehensive account would produce a different picture. It might be claimed, for instance, that the philosophers studied here represent only one side in a large-scale philosophical debate with complex cultural roots, namely the debate about the relationship between *nomos* ('law', 'ethics') and *physis* ('nature').³² It would be possible to argue that we can discern in thinkers on the opposite side the elements of a contrastingly subjective-individualist framework of thinking (in psychology and ethics), and one which Plato especially sets out to confront. Elements in this opposing strand could include (1) the 'Protagorean' relativism or subjectivism of the first part of Plato's *Theaetetus* and (2) Antiphon's radical contrast between the constraints of law or public ethics and natural desires.³³ It could also include (3) a broader range of type of evidence from the fifth and fourth centuries, including the celebration in Thucydides' account of Pericles' funeral speech of a

²⁹ Everson (1991a), esp. 127–32, 141–7.

³⁰ See 1.1 above, text to nn. 17–19.

³¹ On the basis for this selection, see *Intro.*, n. 50.

³² On this debate, see e.g. Guthrie (1969), ch. 4; Kerferd (1981b), ch. 10.

³³ On (1), see e.g. Burnyeat (1990), 7–31, 39–42; on (2) see Guthrie (1969), 107–13, and refs. in n. 36 below.

type of (Athenian) mode of social life that allows its citizens to live 'as they please' (*καθ' ἡδονήν*) in their private affairs at least.³⁴ A corresponding claim would be that Socrates' principal targets in the *Gorgias* and *Republic* 1, Callicles and Thrasymachus, together with, for instance, the democratic psycho-ethical type in *R.* 8–9, constitute exemplars of an ethically subjective-individualist standpoint that Plato is concerned to undermine. On this view, the situation in fifth- and fourth-century Athens, at any rate, would be much more like the modern situation, as described here: that is, a combination of different conceptions of personality, including subjective-individualist and objective-participant strands.

I accept wholly one of the implications of this line of criticism: that a fuller, and more culturally diverse, picture of Greek thinking than I can offer here would provide a more fine-grained account of the conceptions of personality, and one that would bring out more clearly areas of debate and disagreement. On the other hand, although the picture sketched in the previous paragraph may seem plausible at first glance, I am doubtful that it can be sustained in detail in a way that would bear on the substance of my claims. For one thing, there is room for argument about whether any one of the types of evidence can yield the required reading. I have already noted Burnyeat's distinction between the 'Protagorean' subjectivism or relativism of the *Theaetetus* and the more thoroughgoing form of Cartesian subjectivism that can be seen, in turn, as underlying the radical subjective-individualism of modern thinkers such as Nagel.³⁵ Also, according to at least one recent account, Antiphon's apparently 'immoralist' text is rather to be read as a complaint about the ineffectiveness of systems of justice to protect the victims of wrongdoing.³⁶ The extent to which Pericles' funeral speech accommodates anything resembling a subjective-individualist viewpoint (alongside its explicit and emphatic communitarianism) is questionable.³⁷

³⁴ Thuc. 2. 37. 2–3. Other possible evidence includes Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1475, based on E. fr. 19 (see Dover (1993) ad loc.).

³⁵ See text to nn. 28 above. Also, in (1982), 23, Burnyeat stresses that the relativism presented in *Th.* 151e–157b is 'a dialectical construction' (i.e. Plato's analysis of the implications of combined Protagoreanism and Heraclitianism) and not a position that any Greek thinker ever propounded as his own; see further Burnyeat (1990), 7–19.

³⁶ Saunders (1977–8); for discussion of this view, see Furley (1981), 90–1; Kerferd (1981b), 115–17.

³⁷ Thuc. 2. 37. 2–3 needs to be taken together with 2. 40. 2. See further Farrar (1988), 28–9, 162–3, 186. Another type of evidence relevant to this question, contemporary reactions to Alcibiades, and to (what we see as) his 'individualism', is analysed

Although it is clear that certain pervasive strands in the *nomos-phusis* debate were seen at the time as connected lines of thought,³⁸ I know of no ancient text that brings together evidence such as that listed here and presents it as an expression of a subjective-individualist strand. Indeed, much of the material for the 'immoralist' strand in the debate (including that drawn from Plato's dialogues) lends itself more naturally to a contrary interpretation from that required by this view. What is presupposed is that there is some relatively determinate (shared) human 'nature' (*phusis*), or some way of life that *anyone* (if freed from legal or social constraints) would choose, rather than that each individual, as a unique locus of subjectivity, is naturally disposed to choose a distinctively individual way of life.³⁹ Although much more argument would be needed to support my reading of this evidence, I think that enough has been said to suggest that it is potentially defensible against this line of criticism.

6.3 CRITERIA OF PERSONHOOD (2): 'SECOND-ORDER' PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS

I have suggested that one key criterion of personhood in (much) modern theorizing about personhood (being an 'I', an individual centre of subjectivity) does not play a significant role in Greek thinking about normative humanity. More precisely, I think that this criterion does not serve as an effective starting-point, or 'bridge-head', in seeking to engage with dialogue with Greek thinking on normative concepts of the relevant type.⁴⁰ My discussion has, so far, been negative, except in so far as it has helped to substantiate the approach followed elsewhere in this book, that of analysing Greek psychological thinking in 'objective' (non-subject-centred) terms, such as those of the interplay between parts or functions. As regards

thoroughly in Gribble (1994), in a way that, I think, bears out my claims about the pervasively 'objective-participant' character of Greek ethical thinking.

³⁸ e.g. the combination of (1) the naturalistic rejection of a traditional religious world-view; (2) the denial that ethics has an objective foundation; (3) the rejection of conventional ethical norms; this combination is ascribed to 'Socrates' in Aristophanes' *Clouds* and to the supporters of 'nature' in Pl. *Lg.* 889a–890a; see e.g. Guthrie (1969), 114–16.

³⁹ See e.g. Pl. *Grg.* 482e–484c, 491e–492c, *R.* 343b–344c; for the claim that the psycho-ethical types of *R.* 8–9, including the democratic type, are not presented as making 'individualistic' choices, see 4.2 above, n. 63.

⁴⁰ See 6.2 above, text to n. 5.

the second key criterion discussed here, the possession of 'second-order' psychological functions, there are grounds, in my view, for a rather more positive conclusion. However, the modern theory taken here as exemplifying this criterion (a celebrated article by Harry Frankfurt (1971)), presents it in a form which, I suggest, is informed by subjective-individualist thinking. Therefore, correlating Frankfurt's account with the thinking about second-order functions stated or implied in Greek sources helps to define, by contrast, what is involved in an objective-participant version of this criterion.

Frankfurt denies that his criteria of personhood are to be regarded as confined to human beings as such. None the less, he presents his criteria as 'designed to capture those attributes which are the subject of our most humane concerns with ourselves and the source of what we regard as most important and problematical in our lives' (p. 6). He also describes the problem of defining personhood as being 'that of understanding what we ourselves essentially are' (*ibid.*). In effect, he treats 'persons' as constituting the subdivision of human beings who realize the essentially human qualities; in this respect, his theory is broadly comparable with Greek thinking of the type considered here.⁴¹

Human beings are not alone in having desires and motives, or in making choices . . . It seems to be peculiarly characteristic of humans, however, that they are able to form what I call 'second-order' desires . . . Besides wanting and choosing and being moved *to do* this or that, men may also want to have (or not to have) certain desires and motives. They are capable of wanting to be different, in their preferences and purposes, from what they are. (6–7)

In specifying his criteria for personhood, Frankfurt gives a special meaning to the term 'will', reserving it for those first-order desires which are effective in leading to action (8). The 'person', for Frankfurt, is someone who not only has second-order desires (desires *about* his desires); he is also someone who 'wants a certain [first-order] desire to be his will' (10). Human beings who have first-order but no second-order desires about their will are classified by Frankfurt as sub-persons or 'wantons' (11–14). On the basis of these distinctions, Frankfurt offers a revised account of the idea of freedom of

⁴¹ See 6.2 above, text to n. 7. Sorabji (1993) brings out how far the modern debate whether non-human animals can count as 'persons' is prefigured in Greek thought; see also Gill (1990d), 4–8. But I focus here, in Greek thinking, on the question of which qualities make human beings 'essentially' human (or 'divine', in the way that human beings can be); see further 6.4–5 below.

the will, which has often been taken in modern thinking as a distinctive characteristic of human beings (or of 'persons').⁴² For Frankfurt, someone has freedom of the will if 'he is free to will what he wants to will, or to have the will he wants' (15). Although freedom of the will, in this sense, is associated by Frankfurt with the idea of personhood, it is clear that not all 'persons', in Frankfurt's sense, let alone all human beings, have this freedom (or at least, do not have it consistently). The crucial criterion of personhood for Frankfurt is that of having desires about one's will at all, whether or not these (second-order) desires are effective in determining the will in question (10–11, 14–20.)

I consider later the pattern of thinking that underlies Frankfurt's definition of personhood.⁴³ But I take up, first, the question how far this account corresponds with Greek philosophical characterizations of distinctively human psychological functions. I have noted already certain Aristotelian and Stoic comments on these (typically, distinguishing the functions of human from non-human animals), and I begin with these. The features are, broadly speaking: the capacity for rationality (including having beliefs and inferential reasoning), the use of language, sociability (in familial and communal life), the desire and capacity to search for knowledge of the truth, and (in Stoic thinking) the capacity to recognize the order and regularity of nature.⁴⁴

Although these characteristics are sometimes cited separately, it is clear that they are conceived as forming an interconnected set. I have noted already the connections seen in these theories between having propositional attitudes (such as, believing *that* something is the case), inferential reasoning, and the use of language. In essence, the distinctively human capacity for reasoning (conceptualization and inference), as structured in language, is seen as enabling propositional attitudes which involve conceptualization and inference, such as the belief *that x is y*.⁴⁵ It is possible also to see connections between these characteristics and the capacity for (certain kinds of) sociability. For instance, Aristotle marks a connection between belief (*doxa*), conviction or persuasion (*pistis*), that is, 'having been

⁴² See further 6.6 below, text to nn. 148–9.

⁴³ See text to nn. 62–7 below.

⁴⁴ See 1.2 above, text to nn. 70–6; and Gill (1991); also 5.5 above, text to nn. 220–4. See also refs. in nn. 46–7 below.

⁴⁵ 1.2 above, text to nn. 70–6; Gill (1991), 180–3, 186–91.

persuaded', and rationality (*logos*). 'Having been persuaded' (*πέπεισθαι*) implies the existence of a social group of language-using animals capable of having propositional attitudes and of communicating these to each other.⁴⁶ It is plausible also to see the (distinctive kinds of) sociability ascribed to human beings in both Aristotelian and Stoic texts as constituting the expression of these capacities (among others) in structured forms of interpersonal and communal life.⁴⁷ It is also plausible to see the capacities for conceptualization, inference, propositional attitudes, language-use, and structured associativeness, as constituting the prerequisites for proper expression of the desire and capacity to understand the nature of reality, which both theories present as distinctively human features.⁴⁸ Indeed, as I have indicated already and argue further later, it is interconnections of this type, which can be found in other aspects of Greek thought, that help to validate my general claim that Greek thinking is objective-participant in the picture offered of human characteristics.⁴⁹

On the face of it, this nexus of characteristics does not offer any obvious analogue for Frankfurt's idea that the possession of 'second-order' desires about one's (effective) first-order desires constitutes the crucial mark of personhood and of essentially human capacities. However, at various points in this book, I have suggested that a key feature of Greek thinking, both in its poetic and philosophical forms, is the idea that human beings are capable, in principle, of both first-order and second-order reasoning. I begin by summarizing certain aspects of this idea, referring especially to Homeric and Platonic versions, to provide the basis for marking salient similarities with, and differences from, Frankfurt's account.

In analysing the thought-patterns of the Homeric deliberative monologues in Chapter 1, I suggested that these could be interpreted helpfully by reference to Aristotelian and Stoic models of practical reasoning and ethical motivation. The monologues can be seen as

⁴⁶ Arist. DA 428^a19–24; see further Gill (1991), 180, and Sorabji (1993), 36–7, who thinks that Aristotle has primarily in mind *self*-persuasion, as a result of internalized dialogue.

⁴⁷ e.g. Arist. NE 1097^b8–11, the human race is 'naturally adapted to live in a polis' (*phusei politikon*); Cic. Fin. 3. 63–4 (= LS 57F(2–3)) taken with 5.5 above, text to nn. 220–6.

⁴⁸ e.g. Arist. Metaph. 1.1 esp. 980^a21–7, NE 1177^b26–1178^a7, taken with Lear (1988), 1–14; LS 54H(1), N, 63E (5–6).

⁴⁹ 5.5 above, text to nn. 220–6; below text to nn. 53–9, 68–71; 6.4 text to nn. 84–90; 6.5, text to nn. 122–9; 6.7, text to nn. 215–35.

displaying, for instance, means–end or rule–case inferential reasoning, or (in Stoic terms) ‘assent’ to ‘impressions’ which have propositional content. In either model, a crucial motivating role is played by certain value-laden propositions of the type, ‘this act (or this type of act) is good’, which serve, for instance, as the goal of means–end reasoning or the object of ‘assent’.⁵⁰ In those Iliadic monologues which express good ethical motivation, I suggested that the primary goal of practical reasoning in battle is that of acting honourably (and avoiding dishonourable acts). I took the conclusion of Odysseus’ monologue as a clear expression of this goal, and of its motivating force: ‘I know that it is cowards who leave the fight, but whoever is to be best in battle must stand his ground strongly, whether he is hit or hits someone else.’⁵¹ Practical reasoning of this type, determining the basis for action in a specific case, can be classed as ‘first-order’ reasoning.

‘Second-order’ reasoning can be classed as reflection *about* the goals (or rules, or general propositions) which are operative in first-order reasoning. In the *Iliad*, I took both Sarpedon’s speech and Achilles’ as constituting examples of such reasoning. To judge from these examples, the typical form of Homeric reflective reasoning is that of correlating the goal or rule in question with a certain type of social bond (for instance, that of chieftain–chieftain or chieftain–people relationships). A further element, present in different ways in both speeches, is the presentation of this type of social bond as a worthwhile form for a human life to take. In Sarpedon’s case, this pattern is straightforwardly represented. In Achilles’ case, there is an apparent denial of the kind of general proposition that is presented as motivating Odysseus, and of the idea that the form of social bond associated with this proposition constitutes a worthwhile human life. But, as I have argued, Achilles’ speech is more appropriately taken as a bitter denunciation of the *abuse* of this kind of bond by Agamemnon; it is one which, by implication, also endorses the validity of this kind of bond as a worthwhile form of human life.⁵²

In Greek philosophy, I have discussed the relationship between first- and second-order reasoning especially in connection with the educational programme and psychological theory of Plato’s *Republic*.

⁵⁰ 1.2 above, text to nn. 77–97.

⁵¹ 1.2 above, text to nn. 83–4; 1.3 above, text to nn. 144–59.

⁵² See above 2.6, text to nn. 123–35; 2.8, text to nn. 187–94.

On the account of Plato’s psychological theory presented here, as in the Homeric model, (adult) human motivation is presented as informed by beliefs and reasoning. In all human beings, the reasoning part does its job of ‘taking care of’ the psyche as a whole in the sense that it engages in (first-order) practical reasoning in the light of certain general, action-guiding ideas, which shape aspirations and desires. For instance, the well-trained auxiliary will enter battle with a firm grasp of the belief that ‘death is not terrible’ (a belief which could have been expressed in the words of Odysseus cited earlier), a belief which has been ‘internalized’ in a way that decisively shapes aspirations and desires.⁵³ Plato’s theory also stresses more—or more explicitly—than Homer’s the thought that all (adult) human beings also engage in second-order, reflective reasoning, of the type displayed in *R.* 8–9. As in the Homeric pattern, such reasoning is presented as a ‘choice of lives’ in that the figures see a certain set of goals and pattern of relationships as constituting a worthwhile human life. As in the Homeric model, such second-order reasoning is presented as validating or invalidating the general beliefs (such as Odysseus’) which inform first-order reasoning. The general view taken about what is and is not desirable shapes in this way the operation of occurrent aspirations and desires in first-order reasoning.⁵⁴

Where the Platonic picture, arguably, differs from the Homeric is in the sharp differentiation between the normative (‘reason-ruled’) version of this pattern and the defective (‘unreasonable’) version. What is involved is not, despite initial appearances, simply the relationship between ‘parts’ with highly determinate functions. A key point of the argument is that the way in which the parts fulfil their functions is crucially affected by the overall pattern of action-guiding beliefs; and this point underlies the idea that different types of person are ‘ruled’ by different parts.⁵⁵ The normative, ‘reason-ruled’, person is one whose first-order reasoning is informed by *true* beliefs, such as that ‘death is not terrible’, rather than false ones. Such beliefs need to be substantiated by (properly conducted) second-order reasoning, that is, dialectic; but, as I have stressed, the

⁵³ See above, 4.2, text to nn. 35–47; 4.4, text to nn. 92–105; 4.6, text to nn. 195–205.

⁵⁴ See 4.2 above, text to nn. 54–63 (on the link with the poetic ‘choice of lives’ theme, see refs. in n. 62). The fact that the long-term ‘choice of life’ shapes occurrent (short-term) aspirations and desires is especially clear in *R.* 553d1–7; see also 550a–b, 559d–561e.

⁵⁵ See refs. in n. 54 above.

programme of the *Republic* implies a more complex and stringent set of conditions. What is required is *both* an upbringing in a community shaped by such true beliefs *and* properly conducted dialectic among participants who have made these beliefs part of their character.⁵⁶ A further complication is that second-order reasoning, even under these conditions, is presented as *reshaping* (while not invalidating completely) the action-guiding beliefs which inform first-order reasoning in a reason-ruled community. As I suggested, this further feature (which can be paralleled in other Greek theories) allocates to (properly grounded) second-order reasoning a role which goes beyond that allocated to this in the Homeric and tragic models.⁵⁷

This summary of certain features of Greek thinking provides the starting-point for a comparison with Frankfurt's account of personhood. An obvious difference is that Frankfurt's theory is framed in terms of 'desires' (first- and second-order) and 'will' rather than types of 'reasoning'. But this difference is not, on its own, decisive, since Frankfurt's understanding of 'desires' clearly accommodates a role for belief and reasoning, and the Greek understanding of the role of beliefs and reasoning is that they shape motivation ('desires', for Frankfurt).⁵⁸ If we lay this difference aside, the obvious common element is that both Frankfurt's model and the Greek ones present second-order functions (desires or reasoning) as a key feature in distinctively human psychology. For Frankfurt, it is *the* key feature. This is not true, without qualification, in the Greek models, but it is, certainly, *a* key feature of human capacities in the Homeric, Platonic, and other versions. Also, the Greek versions give scope for the idea that second-order functions do, and should, decisively inform first-order functions, an idea which is central to Frankfurt's model.⁵⁹

However, to press further the significant areas of difference, we need to fasten on the points which I have taken as differentiating the subjective-individualist from the objective-participant conceptions of personality. An evident difference between Frankfurt's and the Greek models is that Frankfurt couches his theory in individual terms whereas the Greek models presuppose engagement with an (ethical and dialectical) community. Is this difference important? I

⁵⁶ See above 4.5, text to nn. 138–56; 4.6, text to nn. 189–205.

⁵⁷ See above 4.6, text to nn. 206–25; 246–9; 4.7, text to nn. 259–67, 290–2; also 5.6, text to nn. 275–91; 5.7, text to nn. 325–64.

⁵⁸ On Frankfurt, see text to n. 42 above; on the Platonic pattern, see text to nn. 53–4 above.

⁵⁹ See Frankfurt (1971), 8–14; on Plato, see refs. in nn. 54, 57 above.

think that it is, and that pursuing this point can serve to highlight the differing conceptual frameworks involved. One way of opening up this issue is to ask why Frankfurt attaches such a crucial role to *second-order* desires, desires *about* one's desires. I think that Frankfurt's account can be seen as a way of encapsulating, in a less metaphysically 'loaded' form, some of the leading themes of post-Cartesian and post-Kantian thought about personhood; and that the great interest that his theory has aroused derives in part from this fact.⁶⁰

For instance, Frankfurt's theory presupposes the capacity for self-awareness that has often been taken as central in post-Cartesian thinking, a point signalled in his description of the possession of second-order desires as 'the capacity for reflective *self-evaluation*' (p. 7, my italics). There is room for argument about precisely how much (and what form) of the post-Cartesian concept of personal identity Frankfurt's theory requires. Adam Morton argues that, for Frankfurt's account to provide a fully intelligible theory of personhood, we need to supply the idea that 'I' am a continuing individual subject, with first-personal memory, and a sense of my desires as *mine* (belonging to the 'I' as so understood).⁶¹ Whether or not we accept Morton's claims about this, Frankfurt's assumption that second-order desires have a special status in defining 'persons' does seem to presuppose the importance attached to functions involving self-awareness (in this case, desires about *my* desires) in post-Cartesian thought.⁶²

Frankfurt's theory can also be seen as presupposing the idea that the ability for 'autonomy' (in some sense) is criterial of 'persons'. As we have seen, Kant conceives autonomy as the capacity to detach oneself from one's existing desires and inclinations and to legislate for oneself rules which have overriding force (which are effective in

⁶⁰ For some contemporary philosophical responses to his theory, see refs. in nn. 61–2, 65–6.

⁶¹ More precisely, Morton's claim is that Frankfurt's definition does not provide the basis for a species-neutral (universal) account of personhood because, if the definition is to be fully intelligible to us human beings, we need to supply these further, 'I'-centred, ideas: see Morton (1990), esp. 54–9.

⁶² On self-consciousness and the post-Cartesian model of personhood, see 1.1 above, text to nn. 17–19. This point is not negated by the fact that Frankfurt's idea of second-order desires can be translated into other psychological terms; see e.g. Dennett (1976), 192–3, who translates it into functionalist terms (see 3.2 above, text to nn. 35–40) and, in so doing, situates it in a different conceptual framework.

determining action).⁶³ Frankfurt's idea of the capacity to have second-order desires which determine one's effective first-order desires (one's 'will', in Frankfurt's sense) can be taken as a version of Kantian autonomy. Also, Kant's understanding of freedom of the will as the ability to exercise 'autonomy', in this sense, may underlie Frankfurt's conception of freedom of the will as that of being 'free to will what [one] wants to will', that is, to make one's second-order desires effective in action.⁶⁴

However, Frankfurt's position reflects a post-Kantian, rather than Kantian, conception of autonomy in a way that comes out in this comment:

I do not mean to suggest that a person's second-order volitions necessarily manifest a *moral* stance on his part towards his first-order desires . . . a person may be capricious and irresponsible in forming his second-order volitions and give no serious consideration to what is at stake. Second-order volitions express evaluations only in the sense that they are preferences. There is no essential restriction on the kind of basis, if any, upon which they are formed. ((1971), 13 n. 6, his italics)

This comment expresses, in a weaker and less theorized form, Sartre's idea that all moral choices are grounded in an act of radical choice (the choice to regard a given act as a morally binding one), and that it is the process of (self-conscious) choice, not the character of the act, that gives it ethical weight.⁶⁵ To put the point differently, Frankfurt's validation of *any* second-order desires presupposes (without arguing for) a 'subjective-individualist' conception of autonomy. It is unsurprising, then, that this aspect of his thinking has aroused criticism from modern thinkers such as Charles Taylor and Gabriele Taylor, who write from (what I am calling) a more 'objective-participant' ethical standpoint.⁶⁶

⁶³ On Kant, see above 1.1, text to nn. 26–30; 4.2, text to nn. 9–12; on the links between Frankfurt's theory and the idea of autonomy (including Kantian autonomy), see Morton (1990), 42–3.

⁶⁴ On Kant's idea of freedom of the will, see 6.6 below, text to nn. 150–2; see Frankfurt (1971), 14–20, esp. 15, cited in text to n. 42 above.

⁶⁵ On Sartre, see e.g. Kerner (1990), 149–67, Dilman (1991); on Frankfurt's theory as expressing a version of Sartre's (or Nietzsche's) position, in which values are taken to depend on radical, i.e. externally ungrounded, choice, see C. Taylor (1976), 289–94, (1977), 117–23.

⁶⁶ They have two main criticisms: (1) that Frankfurt's account of 'evaluation' is insubstantial even considered in relation to the individual agent (it lacks the idea that an agent chooses to live a certain *kind of life*, i.e. he carries out 'strong evaluations' (C. Taylor) or aims at 'integrity' or 'wholeness of life' (G. Taylor)); (2) that Frankfurt gives

These points bear out the suggestion made earlier (text to n. 60 above), that Frankfurt's definition of personhood is informed by some of the features of post-Cartesian and post-Kantian thought that contribute to the subjective-individualist conception of the person. Although the criteria of having second-order desires is not explicitly subjective (centred on the notion of the 'I' as subject) or explicitly linked with the notion of autonomy (a notion which I am taking as characteristically 'individualist'), the force of Frankfurt's definition can be seen as deriving from those key subjective-individualist themes. In the case of the Greek models outlined earlier (text to nn. 50–7 above), the second-order functions are situated in a framework which combines an 'objective' (non-subject-centred) psychological model with a 'participant' ethical model, and, in the case of Plato at least, an 'objectivist' approach to ethics and ethical psychology.⁶⁷ Although both Homer and Plato seem to regard second-order reasoning as a pervasive capacity of adult human beings (and attach *some* value to *some* second-order reasoning), they do so in a way that reflects this different framework of thinking.

Thus, in Homeric thinking (by implication, at least), value is attached not to second-order reasoning as such but rather to that second-order reasoning which is derived validly from the action-guiding principles recognized in the first-order (practical) reasoning of the person's ethical community. To say this is not to say that Homeric second-order reasoning constitutes simply a restatement of those principles. As indicated earlier, it involves correlating those principles with a certain type of social bond, and conceiving that type of bond as a worthwhile form of human life. As Achilles' speech in *Iliad* 9 brings out, such reasoning may involve a kind of interrogation, or rethinking, of the relationship between action-guiding principles, social bond, and form of human life. But, as I argued, his interrogation is partial, not total; his second-order reasoning is derived ultimately from the principles that shape his mode of shared

no attention to the idea that evaluation *has grounds* (e.g. in interpersonal or communal relationships, developed over the course of a life). See C. Taylor (1976), 281–8, (1977), 103–10 and refs. in n. 65 above; G. Taylor (1985), 111–20. On C. Taylor and G. Taylor as contributors, at least by implication, to an 'objective-participant' ethical approach, see above, 1.3, text to nn. 118–19; 2.5, text to n. 106.

⁶⁷ On 'objective' and 'objectivist', in these senses, see *Introd.*, text to n. 30; on the extent to which Homeric ethical thought, like Platonic, may be considered 'objectivist', in this respect, see 4.7 above, text to nn. 273–8.

life (the ethics of chieftainly reciprocity).⁶⁸ Hence, this speech does not express the thought that the *very process* of second-order reasoning has inherent value, regardless of the way that such reasoning is grounded (an idea implied in Frankfurt's theory).⁶⁹ To rephrase the point, although (adult) human beings are conceived as being characteristically capable of second-order reasoning, and such reasoning, when grounded properly, is seen as capable of defining the nature of a worthwhile human life, the capacity for second-order reasoning, regardless of its quality or validity, is not presented, even by implication, as making someone (normatively) 'human'.

The preconditions of valid second-order reasoning in Plato's *Republic*, outlined earlier, can be seen as a theorized version of this Homeric pattern. These preconditions are: (1) that second-order reasoning should be grounded in the principles shaping first-order reasoning in one's ethical community; and (2) that such second-order reasoning should constitute properly conducted dialectic. However, there is the further precondition (3) that the first-order principles must be themselves validated by properly grounded and conducted dialectic.⁷⁰ An additional factor is that such dialectic, even when both grounded in, and serving to validate, the principles of pre-dialectical virtue, can create motivation which is in partial conflict with these principles, as in the attitude of the philosopher-rulers towards re-entering the cave.⁷¹ However, even the latter two points, which give special value to *certain kinds* of second-order reasoning, constitute a framework of thinking which is significantly different from that which leads Frankfurt to give inherent value to *any* second-order reasoning, in so far as he takes the capacity for such reasoning as sufficient to constitute (normative) personhood. Although second-order reasoning has a special place for Plato in making someone (normatively) 'human' in the full sense or 'divine', in the way that human beings can be (6.6, text to nn. 184–6), this special place depends on the realization of the conditions just outlined; and these conditions derive from the objectivist-participant character of the framework of thinking involved.

⁶⁸ See text to n. 52 above; and for the contrasting view that Achilles' interrogation is total, and expresses (Sartrean or Nietzschean) 'radical' choice, see 2.5 above, text to nn. 98–111.

⁶⁹ See text to nn. 65–6 above.

⁷⁰ See 4.5 above, esp. text to nn. 172–3, summarized in text to n. 56 above.

⁷¹ See 4.6 above, esp. text to nn. 226–58, and refs. in n. 57 above.

6.4 METHODOLOGY OF THEORIES OF PERSONHOOD AND HUMAN NATURE

I turn now from the question of criteria of normative concepts such as 'personhood' and 'human nature' to that of the methodology used to define and apply such criteria. As becomes clear, these two questions are closely interconnected. A central theme of my discussion is that Greek philosophical thinking about what it means to be normatively 'human', 'divine', or 'what each of us is' exemplifies a form of objective-participant thinking on this topic which can be explicated by reference to contemporary debate, even though Greek thinking is not identical with any one modern approach. The question of the proper methodology for discussing concepts such as personhood and human nature is a subject of considerable dispute in modern philosophy. I start by outlining three types of position in this debate. The key question underlying these positions, and much of the whole current debate, is this: what, if anything, can *legitimate* one conception of personhood or human nature rather than another?⁷²

In Chapter 1, I cited Kathleen Wilkes as a critic of the post-Cartesian strand in modern thinking about personhood and personal identity (1.2, text to nn. 38–46). Her criticisms bear both on the criteria used to define personal identity and on the methodology used in the application of these criteria. As regards criteria, she is critical of the definition of personal identity by reference to the idea of the 'I'-centred subject rather than to the kinds of inner cohesion and conflict which are found in 'real people' (human beings as objects of scientific psychological enquiry). As regards methodology, she is critical of the widespread practice of determining the locus of personal identity by arguments based on intuitions about where 'I' am. This approach is sometimes couched in the form of 'thought-experiments' (such as brain transplants or the 'teletransportation' of brains) which are designed to explicate, or to modify, our intuitions about who 'I' am. These thought-experiments are used to ask questions such as this: when my brain goes to a new body (or to a vat of

⁷² This question is posed in a particularly stark form by Rorty (1990), who claims, in effect, that there is no basis in current philosophical discussion for legitimating one concept of personhood rather than another, and, therefore, that the presentation of this notion as a single, determinate category is spurious. On the question whether the concept of 'human nature' has a useful role to play in contemporary ethical theory, see e.g. Diamond (1991) and McNaughton (1991).

chemical preservative), do 'I' go with the brain (as 'subject', or as locus of continuing psychological life) or stay with the body, the normal context of my animal (human) nature?⁷³ In Wilkes's view, such procedures are doubly flawed. They are based, as indicated, on the (post-Cartesian) idea of the person as 'I'-centred subject, which Wilkes thinks is derived from a philosophically dubious understanding of human psychology. Also they direct our attention to subjective intuitions about hypothetical situations in which normal categories do not apply fully rather than to sources of empirical (ideally, scientific) evidence about human psychological 'identity' and disunity.⁷⁴

A different set of criticisms have also been noted from the start of this book, and have helped to shape much of the argument of Chapters 4 and 5. These come from the modern thinkers that I have taken as being, in different ways, exemplary of the 'participant' approach to ethics: MacIntyre and Williams. The core of their case is that, if general notions such as 'person' and 'human nature' have any efficacy in ethical life and theory, this is so only because, and in so far as, these notions depend on, and articulate, beliefs that are already part of the fabric of interpersonal and communal life, or of the 'tradition' which this generates. Correspondingly, these thinkers are sceptical of the claim that such general notions can play an 'Archimedean' role in ethical life and theory, either in drawing immoralists into ethical life or in revising conventional ethical categories and practices. Their scepticism is directed especially at Kantian and post-Kantian ethical theory, in which the key norm is that of the (individual) rational agent, but also, for instance, Utilitarian theories in which the idea of 'person' is sometimes allocated this 'Archimedean' role.⁷⁵

These two positions can be taken as representing a psychologically objective (non-subject-centred) position and an ethically participant one, respectively; and both of these are relevant to the approach to normative concepts which, I think, is present in the Greek theories. But there is a third position which is closer still to the kind of combination that I see in the Greek theories. The nature of

⁷³ Such thought-experiments are used extensively by e.g. Parfit (1984), chs. 10–13.

⁷⁴ Wilkes (1988), *passim*; for responses to these claims, see e.g. Cockburn (1991), 117–22, 138–41, 147–51, 153–4, 213–14.

⁷⁵ See *Introd.*, text to nn. 23–4; 4.5, text to nn. 162–70; 5.3, text to nn. 68–74. Targets of their criticism include Rawls (1971), Tooley (1983), Parfit (1984), part 3; on these see e.g. Williams (1985), 75–81, 114–15.

this position, and of the issue concerned, needs to be defined carefully. This issue is not identical with (though it is related to) a major question of current debate: whether the concept of 'person' is necessarily specific to human beings or whether it can and should be defined in a way that is neutral between animal species and other kinds of being.⁷⁶ The issue that I have in view is rather this: whether or not, in defining normative concepts such as 'person', we necessarily do, and should, draw on our own (distinctively human) psychological and ethical experience and understanding.⁷⁷

On the latter issue, of special interest for my purposes is an essay by David Wiggins,⁷⁸ which has two related theses. One is that we cannot give any determinate content to our notion of person without drawing on 'our understanding of "human being" and our empirical notions of what a human being is' (p. 60). The other is that it is possible (though difficult) to hold 'in a single focus' three different ideas of what it is to be a person, namely: '(1) as an object of biological, anatomical, and neurophysical inquiry; (2) as a subject of consciousness; and (3) as a locus of all sorts of moral attributes and the source or conceptual origin of all value.'⁷⁹ The feature of Wiggins's argument that concerns me most is the connection that he makes between our life as practical, interactive agents and our framing of normative concepts. He argues that the three ideas of 'person' just stated are intelligible to us because, and in so far as, we deploy (or at least presuppose) them in the process of interacting with, and making sense of, other human beings. Correspondingly, it is worthwhile for us, as reflective thinkers, to try to hold these ideas 'in a single focus' (as far as possible) because, in our practical life, we are capable of treating others as 'persons' in the three relevant senses, and of doing so in an interconnected way (pp. 70, 72). Wiggins specifically rules out any attempt to draw up a definitive set of psychological criteria of personhood which can be used to determine what is valuable in non-human as well as human forms of life.

⁷⁶ On this issue see e.g. Dennett (1976), Davidson (1985b), Jeffrey (1985), Cherry (1991); and, on the equivalent ancient debate, Sorabji (1993).

⁷⁷ In Gill (1990d), 5–12, 17, these two issues should have been distinguished more clearly than they are.

⁷⁸ Wiggins (1987), based on Wiggins (1980c), ch. 6. The discussion in text to nn. 78–80 below is an abbreviated version of Gill (1990c), 156–8.

⁷⁹ Wiggins (1987), 56, adapted. The second idea ('subject of consciousness') is not, on the view presented in 6.2 above, a key idea in Greek thought: what is relevant is rather the methodology outlined in text to n. 80 below.

Even if the concept of 'person' is not coextensive with that of 'human being', personhood is something which we (as human beings) recognize—and only recognize—in creatures of our own kind, whom we can genuinely 'interpret' as persons in the physical, psychological, and moral sense.⁸⁰

A further relevant feature of Wiggins's discussion is his recognition that, for an account of personhood to be convincing, some answering chord must be struck in the psycho-physical and ethical experience and understanding of the person concerned. The aim is not to *initiate* the process of inducing oneself (or someone else) to see someone as a person (or as a human being who is also a person), but to advance this process, by articulating the kinds of thinking that inform this view. This point comes out clearly in the following quotation, in which Wiggins seems both to be commenting on his own attempt to correlate the concepts of person and human being and on the way in which we (moderns) generally do so:

We reach these marks of the person not by an unprincipled transcription of all the marks of being a human being no matter what, but by letting our conception of human being and our conception of person come together so that each will supply the conceptual lacunae in the other. Our grasp of what it is to be a person gives matter and substance to our conception of persons . . . while our conception of persons, and our apprehension of persons as subjects of consciousness and objects of reciprocity and interpretation, is what directs and animates our search for those marks of human beings in virtue of which we have to see them as the bearers and sources of value. (1987, 74)

A similar approach to that of Wiggins is also taken by Peter Smith, for instance. Smith is sceptical of the idea that we can define the notion of 'person' in a way that does not depend on our own experience and understanding of what is essential to us as human beings. He argues that we should, therefore, operate with the norm of 'human person', defined not by a set of determinate characteristics but rather by the 'right relation', which makes a person 'one of us'. The 'right relation' is explained by reference to the idea of interpretability, and, especially, that of interpretation by simulation. The latter mode of interpretation involves mutuality and presupposes a rich background of shared human life. It is the idea of such a shared

⁸⁰ Thus, from our experience of human-beings-viewed-as-persons, we are able to piece out the necessary incompleteness of any philosophical definition of 'person', such as Locke's; Wiggins (1987), 68–9, also 69–70, 72–3.

life that grounds the notion of a human person rather than the biological definition of a natural kind or the species-neutral specification of personhood.⁸¹ There are obvious points of contact between the approach of Wiggins and Smith and that of MacIntyre and Williams, as presented here. But Wiggins and Smith, while also stressing that any notion of personhood must be based on the shared psychological and ethical life of those using the notion, give a more positive account of the philosophical utility of this notion.⁸² Also, as the quotation from Wiggins (p. 74) indicates, he thinks that the process of correlating the norm of personhood with our understanding of our own human life is one that has ethical as well as conceptual utility.

What I wish to suggest is that the Greek theories discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 embody versions of an approach to the methodology of normative concepts which, while not identical with the modern positions outlined, can be defined by comparison to these. The methodology is one that is correlated with three of the themes (2, 3, and 5) offered in the Introduction (p. 12 above) as summarizing the objective-participant conception of person. These criteria imply a methodology for determining normative concepts which is correspondingly objective-participant in character. The approach implied is 'objectivist' in the sense that it assumes that there are objectively determinable (knowable) concepts of this type (such as being normatively 'human'). It is objective-*participant* in that it assumes that the knowledge of such concepts depends on full and effective participation in interpersonal engagement and reflective debate. (It is this objective-*participant* character of the Greek theories that, as I see it, distinguishes their approach from the type of universalism or objectivism about normative concepts identified by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, which presupposes a more 'individualist' ethical model.)⁸³ The Greek approach also implies the thought that it is only those who meet fully the criteria of normative human status

⁸¹ Smith (1990), as summarized in Gill (1990d), 4–5. For a similar analysis of what the notion of 'human nature' signifies see Botterill (1990), summarized in Gill (1990d), 13.

⁸² Williams (1985), 114–15 and MacIntyre (1991), 189–92, give a strongly negative appraisal of the conceptual utility of the notion. On their (more complex) views about the value of the role of the idea of 'human nature', as deployed in ethical theory, see Gill (1990c), 152–5.

⁸³ See above 4.5, text to nn. 122–37 (suggesting that Irwin's ethical model is not, as it may seem, subjectivist-individualist); 5.2; 5.5, text to nn. 209–37; taken with 6.2, text to nn. 20–6; 6.7 below, text to nn. 236–8.

who are enabled fully to determine, and to understand the significance of, these criteria. Put more positively, human beings are able to do so only in so far as they meet these criteria, through effective participation in the relevant types of discourse. It is the significance of this last thought that I examine especially in this and the following section.

The Greek approach can be contrasted with those modern methodological approaches noted earlier as subject to criticism (as well as, in some respects, those of their modern critics). For instance, there is no obvious room in an approach of this type for the idea that normative status is determined by intuitions about where 'I' go, or what 'I' am, or by arguments (including thought-experiments) designed to elicit or revise such intuitions. This is so not only because, as argued earlier (6.2 above), the Greek theories do not assume a norm centred on the 'I' as subject. It is also because this particular type of modern procedure gives authoritative status to *subjective* intuitions rather than to the justified beliefs (and, ultimately, knowledge) which are posited by the Greek theories as the proper outcome of participation in the relevant kinds of discourse. The Greek theories, like the type of theorizing approved by Wilkes, are also 'scientific' in approach (and, in this respect also, 'objectivist') in so far as their accounts of normative concepts presuppose the accounts of human psychology and psycho-ethical development that are the object of 'scientific' enquiry, as conceived by the various theories. The theories assume certain kinds of consistency between the 'scientific' account of human and divine nature and the deployment of these notions in ethical reflection (though the precise character of this consistency needs to be defined very carefully).⁸⁴

On the other hand, they stress (in a way that Wilkes, for instance, does not) the idea that the proper understanding of the ethical significance of the 'scientific' account presupposes ethical development through proper engagement in interactive and reflective discourse. Thus, the Greek philosophers do not suppose that their ideas of normative human nature, because they are compatible with a 'scientific' world-view, have the kind of 'Archimedean' force that is, in principle, capable of persuading *anyone* that she has reason to become fully 'human' in the relevant sense. Nor, as argued in Chapters 4 and 5, do they think that such 'Archimedean' force is derived from any

⁸⁴ See text to nn. 85–7 and 6.5 below.

other source, such as the 'individualist' norms of the rational agent or 'self' posited in Kantian and some post-Kantian theories. Thus, the Greek theories, in their deployment of normative concepts such as being human and divine, are not vulnerable to the criticisms of the latter approach made by MacIntyre and Williams.⁸⁵ For similar reasons, the Greek theories are comparable, at least in certain respects, with the position of Wiggins, as summarized earlier (text to nn. 79–80 above). In both cases, the emphasis falls on the idea that the effective deployment of normative concepts depends on the relationship between the norm and the person's ethical and psychological experience, rather than on the precise stipulation of normative criteria. In the Greek theories, this emphasis sometimes takes the form of defining, or (partly) enacting, the kind of dialogue, between the kind of partners, in which there is a proper understanding of what it means to be normatively 'human' or 'what each of us is'.⁸⁶ Both approaches allow that the relationship between norm and experience may be a developing one, in which the reflectively-based norm informs the discriminations of psycho-ethical life and vice versa.⁸⁷

However, the Greek theories are also 'objectivist' in their thinking about normative concepts, in a way that is not true of MacIntyre and Williams and may not be true of Wiggins.⁸⁸ This objectivism is sometimes expressed in the form of the claim that these norms are grounded in 'nature', in some sense. In the next section, in giving examples from Greek philosophy of the approach to the methodology of normative concepts that I have in view, I try to provide some of the relevant intellectual context for making sense of this claim. A key point, as indicated in the previous paragraph, is that effective participation in appropriate kinds of interactive and reflective dialogue, yielding ethical understanding at a pre-reflective and post-reflective level, is a precondition for recognizing what it means to say

⁸⁵ See text to n. 75 above. See also above 4.3–4; 4.5, text to nn. 121–56; 5.3, text to nn. 78–104; 5.4, text to nn. 157–8; 5.5; containing arguments against the interpretations of Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, which, in my view, over-assimilate the Greek theories to modern theories which attribute 'Archimedean' force to the idea of the rational agent.

⁸⁶ See n. 80 above; also below 6.5, text to n. 120; 6.6, text to nn. 181–8.

⁸⁷ I take it that this is implied in the passage from Wiggins (1987), 74, cited on p. 426 above; on this aspect of the Greek theories, see text to nn. 111–20 below; 6.6, text to nn. 181–90.

⁸⁸ Wiggins (1976) expresses a type of ethical objectivism, but this is not explicitly present in (1987). On MacIntyre and Williams, see 4.5 above, text to nn. 157–70.

that these norms are grounded in 'nature'. I noted earlier in this chapter that Greek normative concepts, like the idea of 'person' in (some) modern thinking, were seen as grounded in nature, and, therefore, as capable of legitimating, supplementing, or revising conventional norms.⁸⁹ What needs also to be added is that, in Greek thinking, these preconditions are posited for proper recognition of the status of these norms.⁹⁰ In this respect also, a proper grasp of the 'objectivism' of the Greek theories is impossible without taking account of the role of certain forms of 'participation'.

6.5 ARISTOTLE ON BEING HUMAN AND DIVINE

I pursue this view of Greek philosophical thinking about the methodology of normative concepts with reference to some important passages in Aristotle which also bear on the interpretation of related features of Platonic, Stoic, and Epicurean theory.

Aristotle saw a certain kind of ethical, cultural, and indeed political life as a harmonious culmination of human potentialities, recoverable from an absolute understanding of nature. We have no reason to believe in that.

... [in Aristotle's theory] the type of problem which arises for contemporary philosophers about the relationship between "person" and "human being" cannot arise. There is no conceptual space for it. Aristotle has no moral conception of human life which is not already in its own way a scientific and a metaphysical conception and no scientific or metaphysical conception which is not already in its own way a moral conception.

Here, Williams and MacIntyre, respectively, characterize in broadly similar terms (what they see as) Aristotle's moral-cum-metaphysical conception of what it means to be human, and the difference between this and the modern conceptual framework.⁹¹ Both thinkers acknowledge fully that the recognition of the truth of this conception (and the achievement of becoming fully 'human' in the relevant sense) depends on the prior development of ethical dispositions and the correlated beliefs. In this respect, unlike Irwin, they do not see Aristotle's use of the idea of human nature as, in effect, 'Archime-

⁸⁹ See above 6.1, text to n. 1; 6.2, text to n. 6.

⁹⁰ As suggested in text to n. 86 above, the Greek emphasis on these preconditions is comparable to features of Wiggins's thinking though these are conceived by him as the preconditions for a (human) understanding of 'person' rather than the preconditions for understanding 'human (or divine) nature'.

⁹¹ Williams (1985), 52; MacIntyre (1991), reviewing Gill (1990d), 192.

dean'.⁹² However, I think that they could go further than they do in exploring the significance of the 'participant' dimension of Aristotle's thinking for understanding his use of the idea of human and divine nature as normative concepts. I also think that, if one does so, the relationship of Aristotle's thinking on this topic, and that of other Greek theories, to modern thinking about normative concepts looks rather different from the way that it does to MacIntyre and Williams.

One of the key texts often taken to support the view that Aristotle sees the idea of human nature as both a moral and a metaphysical one (more precisely, as a moral one validated by 'metaphysical biology')⁹³ is his characterization of the human 'function' (*ergon*) in *NE* 1.7 as 'activity of the psyche according to virtue' (1097^b24–1098^a17). In an earlier discussion, I have queried Williams's apparent view that, in his account of the human function, Aristotle seeks to articulate what 'an absolute understanding of nature' would yield in support of his characterization of happiness. As Williams puts it, Aristotle believes that an ethical agent who 'stands back' reflectively 'from his own dispositions' and who adopts a view 'from outside' will find nothing but confirmation of the inside view from 'the best possible theory of humanity and its place in the world'.⁹⁴ I have suggested that, taken as a reading of Aristotle's use of the idea of human function in *NE*,⁹⁵ this is questionable in two ways. For one thing, Aristotle's brief taxonomic survey of natural kinds, and the commonplace identification of rationality as the distinctively human function, could count only as a gesture towards defining the perspective on human nature that would be provided by 'an absolute understanding of nature'.⁹⁶ For another, the assertion that the life

⁹² See Williams (1985), 38–40, 43–4, 51–2; MacIntyre (1985), 148–50, 195–7, 202–3. See also *Intro.* text to nn. 24–5; 5.5, esp. text to nn. 166–73.

⁹³ The phrase is that of MacIntyre (1985), 148; see also 158.

⁹⁴ Williams (1985), 52: on the assumptions apparently underlying this view see Gill (1990c), 152–3.

⁹⁵ Williams (1985), 51–2, does not present his comments specifically as a reading of this passage in *NE* 1.7; but it is plausible to take his comments as implying a reading of this famous passage.

⁹⁶ *NE* 1097^b25–1089^a18, esp. 1089^a2–8; on rationality as distinctively human, see 6.3 above, text to nn. 44–9. Also, Aristotle does not use the taxonomic survey to discriminate, and adjudicate, between rival candidates for the good life. Rather, it is offered as a way of formulating an 'outline sketch' (*περιγεγραπθω*, 1098^a20) of an account of the good life, and the issues that it raises are taken up elsewhere (e.g. in 10.7–8). See Gill (1990c), 139–40, 160–1; McDowell (1980), 371.

'according to virtue' constitutes the distinctively human craft or function is one that seems to presuppose the agent's drawing on her 'inside' ethical perspective, rather than 'standing back' from this and viewing it from the outside.⁹⁷

An alternative reading, which I have favoured, is to see the passage as an articulation of the ethical agent's (engaged) view of human nature, as distinct from an attempt to confirm the ethical perspective by an appeal to the factual reality of an independently viewed and value-neutral world.⁹⁸ This reading still allows for the possibility, indeed the likelihood, that the view taken of human nature (as far as it goes) *does* correspond to one that Aristotle thinks is compatible with properly grounded metaphysical and psychological accounts.⁹⁹ As I have put it elsewhere, 'the "world" so explored is the actual world (as viewed from an ethical standpoint), and not some distinct, hermetically sealed, "world" of ethical experience' (1990c, 143). But this reading does not assume that Aristotle actually relies on such accounts, or, indeed, that he claims to be in a position to provide an authoritative statement of what an 'absolute understanding of nature' would consist in. I take Aristotle's use of the idea of the human function, interpreted in this way, as illustrating the general point made earlier about Greek philosophical use of normative concepts. What Aristotle is doing is not legitimating an (ethical) account of the good life by reference to an (independently established) 'metaphysical biology'. Rather, he is articulating, at least as far as his argument requires at this point, the understanding of human nature that is possessed by someone who comes to ethical reflection already equipped with 'the that', a pre-reflective grasp of what virtue involves.¹⁰⁰

Before considering other Aristotelian texts, I take up certain ques-

⁹⁷ NE 1098^a7-18; see Gill (1990c), 140-1, noting that in this passage the terms 'virtue' and 'good' (*spoudaios*) seem to be given a standardly ethical sense and not used in a specifically value-neutral way.

⁹⁸ For broadly similar accounts of NE 1. 7, including criticism of Williams's reading, see McDowell (1980), 366, 371, 375 n. 27; McDowell (1986), reviewing Williams (1985), cited in Gill (1990c), 139-43; also Annas (1988) and (1993), 144; Nussbaum (1995).

⁹⁹ For proposals about what MacIntyre (1985), 148, calls the 'metaphysical biology' implied here, see e.g. Wilkes (1980), 341-5; Irwin (1980), (1988), chs. 15-17; Lear (1988), ch. 4 and 160-4.

¹⁰⁰ On the pattern illustrated, see 6.4 above, text to nn. 88-90. On the role of the idea of the human function in the argument, see nn. 95-6 above. For 'the that', see NE 1. 7, 1098^b2-8, as well as 1. 4, 1095^b4-7; also 4.4 above, text to nn. 112-14.

tions raised by MacIntyre in a challenging review of the volume (Gill, 1990d) in which this earlier discussion appeared. In particular, I would like to correct an apparent misunderstanding by MacIntyre of my reading of NE 1. 7. While disputing Williams's view that the passage presents the confirmation of the ethical agent's 'inside view' by an 'outside view' (based on a non-ethical understanding of nature), I suggest that the passage may represent the *combination* or 'blurring' of 'inside' and 'outside' views (1990c, 141-3). The ethical agent, in the light of her possession of 'the that', sees the human function (understood as a fact about the world) as 'activity of the psyche according to virtue' (NE 1098^a16-17). MacIntyre takes this suggestion as a key part of my claim, in the Introduction to the volume, that analogous issues arise in ancient philosophy, in connection with the normative role of the idea of human being, to those which arise in modern philosophy in connection with the idea of person.¹⁰¹

In particular, MacIntyre sees my reading of NE 1. 7 as designed to illustrate how ancient philosophers confront a problem which is also encountered by modern philosophers seeking to correlate the idea of 'person' with that of 'human being'. This problem is that of trying to bridge two perspectives, that 'of the scientific enquirer as external observer' and that 'of the reflective [but ethically engaged] human agent' (MacIntyre (1991), 190). In modern philosophy, MacIntyre sees the two perspectives as (for complex historico-cultural reasons) radically separate. He sees no conceptually credible way of connecting the ex-Christian, post-Darwinian conception of the human being as a biological phenomenon with normative ideals derived from post-Cartesian and post-Kantian psychology and ethics.¹⁰² In Greek philosophy, on the other hand, MacIntyre sees a world-view in which natural (or metaphysical) and ethico-political ideals are conceived as much more integrated. Indeed, for Aristotle, there is 'no moral conception of human life which is not already in its own way a

¹⁰¹ MacIntyre (1991), 191-2, referring to Gill (1990c), 141-3, taken with Gill (1990d), Intro. 7-10, 11-12, 17.

¹⁰² MacIntyre (1991), 188-9, 192-3. There are, I think, two points being made: (1) that, in this type of modern thinking, 'facts' and 'values' are seen as radically separate, and (2) that the *kind* of connection being looked for in modern theories of personhood, i.e. between (post-Darwinian) biological facts and (post-Cartesian and post-Kantian) subjective-individualist values, cannot coherently be made. For some relevant background, see MacIntyre (1985), esp. chs. 3-7; for a partly comparable view, C. Taylor (1989), summarized in 2.5 above, text to n. 106. Cf., in part, C. C. W. Taylor's analysis of the distinctive form of the modern debate about personhood (1992), 65-6, 71.

scientific and a metaphysical conception and no scientific or metaphysical conception which is not already in its own way a moral conception'. Hence, there is no 'conceptual space' for the gap, which he sees in my reading of NE 1. 7, between two 'relatively independent' perspectives (the ethical agent's 'inside' and 'outside' perspectives), and no need for them to be combined in this way.¹⁰³

MacIntyre's comments raise substantive questions about the relationship between ancient and modern thinking, some of which are taken up later.¹⁰⁴ On the more specific question of my earlier interpretation of NE 1. 7, my main aim was not so much to stress Aristotle's attempt to bridge the natural and ethical perspectives, conceived as sharply distinct perspectives. (I accept that, on MacIntyre's view of modern thinking, this is what I *ought* to have been doing, if I was to show that Aristotelian thinking was comparable with modern thinking.) My aim was, rather, to stress the point made earlier: that the account of the human function represents the (engaged) ethical agent's understanding of (a relevant feature of) the world.¹⁰⁵ In the terms used in this book, I wanted to stress Aristotle's emphasis on the 'participant' dimension in ethical life, as a prerequisite for forming a view of the world which Aristotle would regard as objectively correct.¹⁰⁶ When I compared the Aristotelian and Stoic approaches with that of Wiggins, I wished, as I do here, to underline a comparable emphasis, one that, in Wiggins's case, is couched in terms of the contribution made by our engagement as human co-interpreters to understanding what the norm 'person' implies.¹⁰⁷

It is true that, as MacIntyre suggests, there is still *some* conceptual space in my account for a gap which he does not think is present in Greek thought: namely that between natural (or metaphysical) and

¹⁰³ MacIntyre (1991), 192 (also cited in text to n. 91 above), 190.

¹⁰⁴ See below, text to nn. 138–44; 6.7, text to nn. 248–54.

¹⁰⁵ See text to nn. 99–100 above. See also Gill (1990c), 137–8; 'I will argue for the view . . . that these notions [e.g. that of human function] function rather as a means of articulating ideals which are already part of an ethical framework; and that, even if they figure (more than other ethical norms) as part of a world-view, the world in question is one that is viewed from an ethical standpoint.'

¹⁰⁶ See 6.4 above, text to nn. 88–90.

¹⁰⁷ The comparison with Wiggins may have contributed to MacIntyre's misunderstanding of my aims, since Wiggins's project, as summarized in Gill (1990c), 156–8, also includes that of trying to hold 'in a single focus' the idea of the person (or human being) as a biological entity and that of the person as a psychological and moral entity. See also 6.4 above, text to nn. 76–7, seeking to clarify the distinction between the two relevant issues.

moral perspectives. However, in considering further the Aristotelian and other Greek theories, I suggest a rather different, and more complex, picture. Greek philosophers do envisage the philosophical convergence or integration of natural and moral perspectives, provided that this is based on (or accompanied by) the development of the appropriate kind of psycho-ethical character and way of life. But to say this is not quite to say, as MacIntyre seems to, that they become, in effect, parts of a single branch of knowledge.¹⁰⁸ This convergence is envisaged as an ideal, and not an outlook that is readily attainable or already attained by the thinkers themselves. Also, this ideal, even when attained, allows more scope for tension between competing ethical claims than MacIntyre (or Williams) allows.¹⁰⁹ I think that the recognition of these features of ancient thinking about normative concepts leads us to form a rather different picture of the relationship between Greek and modern thought from the one suggested by MacIntyre and Williams.¹¹⁰

The same general point that I have made in connection with NE 1. 7 also applies to Aristotle's use of the idea of 'what each of us is' in NE 9. 4, 8, as interpreted here. I have argued that, in these chapters, he is asking his (ethically prepared) audience to conceive their existing combination of sound dispositions and practical reasoning as 'what each of us is'. In offering this interpretation, I have been concerned, principally, to counteract Irwin's reading of the idea as, in effect, an 'Archimedean' one, designed to convince *anyone* that, as a rational agent, she has reason to achieve the kind of 'self-realization' involved.¹¹¹ But similar considerations would also count against Williams's view that such passages envisage the ethical agent standing back from her dispositions in order to confirm these from 'an absolute understanding of nature'. As in NE 1. 7, I take it that we have, rather, the reflective articulation of the ethical agent's understanding of what it is to be essentially human, defined here in a way that bears especially on her role as a participant in interpersonal exchange.¹¹²

The implications of NE 10. 7–8 for understanding Aristotle's view of the methodology of normative concepts are, obviously, more

¹⁰⁸ See n. 124 below.

¹⁰⁹ See text to nn. 131–7 below and n. 91 above.

¹¹⁰ See text to nn. 119–20, 138–45 below.

¹¹¹ See 5.5 above, text to nn. 163–208.

¹¹² See 5.5 above, text to nn. 176–97, taken with text to nn. 96–7 above and n. 96.

complex. But, in essence, I take it that this also supports my view that an objective understanding of 'what each of us is' is conceived as derived from participation in the proper combination of interactive and reflective exchange. This passage, like certain Platonic passages, also shows that this combination generates certain deep tensions (which are also part of 'what each of us is'), though ones which may be, at a deep level, partly resolvable.¹¹³ A striking feature of *NE* 10. 7–8 is that, even though Aristotle is, in my interpretation, asking his audience to *reconceive* their understanding of 'what each of us is' (identifying this with reflective reasoning), he does not mount a full-scale argument for this claim, based on his metaphysical and psychological theories.¹¹⁴ It is, certainly, possible to construct such an argument on his behalf.¹¹⁵ But Aristotle relies not on this but on much more general considerations to support his claim.¹¹⁶ His procedure here supports my general view that Aristotle does not set out, in such passages, to substantiate 'from an absolute understanding of nature' a certain account of human (or here, human and divine) life. Rather, the idea of 'what each of us is' is used as a way of articulating the understanding of one's essential humanity that derives from certain kinds of participation. More precisely, this idea here serves to articulate the tension, and partial resolution of the tension, that follows from juxtaposing the outcomes of two kinds of participation. What the argument requires is that one should have participated *both* in interpersonal and communal exchange *and* in reflection (not, primarily, ethical reflection)¹¹⁷ to the extent where one can understand the types of rationality involved in each case as constituting, from these two standpoints, 'what each of us is'. What is also required is that one can be led, by the criteria offered, to see reflective or contemplative reason as the superior, or 'divine', version of 'what each of us is', but without

¹¹³ See above 4.6, text to nn. 227–58; 4.7, text to nn. 280–9; 5.6; 5.7, text to nn. 325–8; also 6.5 below, text to nn. 133–4.

¹¹⁴ See 5.6 above, text to nn. 286–91.

¹¹⁵ See e.g. Lear's compelling explanation of the larger significance of the ideas of 'human' and 'divine' and of the basis for the tension expressed here: Lear (1988), 293–320, referring to e.g. *Metaph.* 1072^b13–30, 1074^b33–1075^b5, *DA* 429^b22–430^b7.

¹¹⁶ See 5.6 above, text to nn. 289–90 and refs. in nn. 289–90.

¹¹⁷ It is clear from *NE* 6, and implied in 10. 7–8, that Aristotle's conception of 'contemplative' (*theoretike*) wisdom is not based primarily on ethical reflection (which, for Aristotle, is ultimately practical in its objectives, *NE* 1103^b26–9), but on branches of philosophy such as physics or metaphysics: see 5.6 above, text to nn. 280–1, and more broadly, text to nn. 278–86.

thereby depriving of value the 'human' version. By implication, as I have suggested, the argument invites us to use our recognition of the 'divine' status of reflective reason to inform the 'human' (practical) shaping of our own lives and that of others.¹¹⁸

As so interpreted, Aristotle's approach to the methodology of normative concepts is comparable to that of Wiggins, as outlined earlier. Aristotle's discussion in *NE* 10. 7–8 (as well as in 1. 7 and 9. 4, 8) embodies the thought that the significance of the ideas of being 'human' and 'divine' cannot simply be 'read off' from an account of 'nature' which *anyone* is supposed to be able to understand. In a way that is at least partly analogous, Wiggins stresses the limited usefulness of attempts to provide definitive accounts of personhood; he argues that such accounts always need to be supplemented (in quite crucial ways) by the psychological and ethical experience of those using such definitions.¹¹⁹ Aristotle's argument, as I have suggested earlier, can be seen as a kind of dialogue between partners who are dispositionally and intellectually prepared to make sense of his account of these notions; and, in this respect, it resembles a Platonic discussion considered later.¹²⁰ Aristotle, clearly, places more emphasis than Wiggins on the contribution of philosophical reflection to reshaping the understanding of such norms. Also, his conceptual framework is more (or more explicitly) objectivist as well as participant.¹²¹ However, the latter points of difference should not lead us to overlook the features of *NE* 10. 7–8, as well as 1. 7, which can be highlighted by comparison with Wiggins's approach.

What are the implications of this reading of *NE* 10. 7–8, taken with that of 1. 7 and 9. 4, 8, for appraising the validity of the general characterizations of Aristotle's world-view by Williams and MacIntyre cited at the start of this section (text to n. 91 above)? There are three aspects to this question: the modern thinkers' account of Aristotle's methodology; their presentation of his world-view as a 'harmonious' one; and their view of the relationship between ancient thinking of this type and modern thinking about personhood.

On the first point, as explained, I think that their accounts under-describe the 'participant' dimension of his thinking, and the way in

¹¹⁸ See above 5.6, text to nn. 251–89; 5.7, text to nn. 325–8.

¹¹⁹ See n. 80 above.

¹²⁰ See 5.6 above, text to nn. 255–62, 277–85; and 6.6 below, text to nn. 181–94.

¹²¹ See n. 88 above.

which this is crucial for understanding his objectivism. What Williams calls an 'absolute understanding of nature' is only 'recoverable' (if at all) through the kind of reflective dialogue that draws both on the partners' understanding of their own virtuous character and, in a way that is related to this, ethical reflection that is (implicitly or explicitly) informed by (and which, in turn, informs) metaphysics and the philosophy of nature. Nor is this way of conceiving the proper understanding of 'the norms of nature'¹²² peculiar to Aristotle. It is true that there are differences between Aristotle, Plato, the Stoics, and Epicureans, on some of the points relevant to this question. For instance, there are differences regarding the kind of social context in which a virtuous character can develop, and, hence, whether there is room for the idea of pre-reflective virtue or only for virtue developed in and through reflection.¹²³ There are also differences on the question of the extent to which ethical reflection can and should be integrated with other branches of philosophy.¹²⁴ But these differences do not prevent the characterization just offered of Aristotle's conditions for 'an absolute understanding of nature' also holding good for these other theories too.

For instance, I have argued elsewhere that the Stoic account of what constitutes a 'natural' ethical development for a human being (part of their theory of *oikeiosis*) presupposes, if it is to be a fully intelligible and convincing account, an audience of people who have, to some extent at least, carried out this development themselves.¹²⁵

¹²² This is the title of a volume (Schofield and Striker (1986)) which contains a range of scholarly approaches to the idea of 'nature' as a norm in Hellenistic ethics. The approach which I am adopting is broadly similar to that of Annas (1993), chs. 3 and 9; see her contrast between ancient and modern versions of 'ethical naturalism' on 135–6.

¹²³ Generally speaking, Aristotle, and the more 'conventionalist' strand in Stoic ethics, see it as possible to develop a virtuous character and the correlated beliefs in ordinary (even imperfect) communities. Epicurus and the more 'radical' strand of Stoic ethics see the development of a virtuous character as going hand-in-hand with, and depending on, reflection. Plato *R.* sees the development of pre-reflective virtue as possible, but only in a community shaped by post-reflective knowledge (which is, in turn, grounded on pre-reflective dispositions). See above 4.4, text to nn. 107–10, 115–19; 4.6, text to nn. 179–225; 5.7, text to nn. 329–59, esp. 346–9, 358–9, and 360–4.

¹²⁴ Pl. *R.* envisages, under ideal conditions, the highest kind of knowledge (that of the Form of the Good) as the outcome of a combination of the understanding of the intelligible structure of the *kosmos* with dialectical analysis of ethical ideals (see *R.* 522–34, taken with 4.5 above, text to nn. 142–53). In Aristotle, the connections between ethical philosophy and other branches of philosophy are largely implicit; see nn. 99, 115, 117 above. On the Stoics and Epicureans, see nn. 126–7 below.

¹²⁵ Gill (1990c), 143–51, referring esp. to Cic. *Fin.* 3. 20–2, 62–3.

More precisely, it presupposes listeners who can interpret this account of what is 'natural' for human beings in the light of their own psychological and ethical experience, coupled with their own grasp of the relevant interconnections between the branches of philosophy that the Stoics classify as logic, ethics, and physics.¹²⁶ Similarly, I think that, for the Epicureans, a proper understanding of 'nature' as a normative ideal depends both on recognizing the relevant connections between ethics and natural philosophy (both these branches of knowledge being seen by them as directed at discovering truth), while at the same time developing a virtuous character, as the Epicureans conceive this.¹²⁷ For instance, it is clear that, to understand fully what 'god' means in Epicurean philosophy, you need not only to grasp, at the intellectual level, how the idea of 'god' is compatible with the Epicurean naturalistic world-view. You need also to form a correct idea of the kind of ethical ideal associated with being 'divine' in Epicurean philosophy, and to actualize the appropriate state of mind in contemplating (and, in this sense, 'worshipping') the gods.¹²⁸ In other words, the 'absolute understanding of nature', as conceived in these Greek theories, is not so much an already achieved or readily achievable world-view, but rather a target or project, the goal of an interconnected set of practical and theoretical activities, and of the ethical and cognitive outcome of these activities.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ On the Stoic emphasis on the need to integrate these three branches of philosophy, see LS 26, with commentary in LS, vol. 1, 160–2. For one way of drawing out the implications of this point for interpreting the Stoic conception of 'nature' as an ethical norm, see Annas (1993), 163–6.

¹²⁷ On the Epicurean view of virtue, see 5.7 above, text to nn. 350–9. Nussbaum (1994), ch. 4, refers to much of the relevant evidence, though she understates (as I shall argue elsewhere) the importance of truth as a goal in both Epicurean ethics and natural philosophy.

¹²⁸ See LS 23A(4) = Lucr. 5. 1194–203, esp. 1203; LS 23B, C(3), D = Lucr. 6. 68–79, esp. 75–8, E(5), F(3), J, K. See LS, vol. 1, 146–7. This interpretation of the Epicurean understanding of 'god' is compatible with, but does not depend on, the innovative account of the Epicurean conception of the nature of the gods given in LS, vol. 1, 144–9.

¹²⁹ The idea that a full understanding of what 'nature' as a norm means (and hence, what it means to be fully 'human' or 'divine') is a target of ethical and cognitive aspirations and not a normal achievement is strongly marked in Plato, e.g. *Smp.* 209e–210a, 212a–b, *R.* (refs. in 4.5 above, n. 151). In Stoic theory, such understanding is possessed fully only by the normative 'wise person' (*sophos*), see e.g. LS 26, esp. A, F(2), G. On Arist. *NE* 10. 7–8 as dialectical enquiry rather than a definitive statement of metaphysical truth, see text to nn. 114–16 above. On Epicurean thinking, see nn. 127–8 above.

What about the unity or cohesion of the picture of the ideal human (or divine) life that is yielded by this 'absolute understanding'? Both Williams and MacIntyre make strong claims about the way in which this integrates or harmonizes different types of human capacities and motives, including the moral and scientific or metaphysical. On the face of it, their claims are falsified by the explicit conflict between (roughly) moral and metaphysical capacities in Aristotle *NE* 10. 7–8, and also by Plato's underlining of the philosopher-rulers' reluctance to re-enter the cave of political action.¹³⁰ As I suggested earlier, the Epicureans and Stoics seem to offer solutions, of different types, for the competing ethical claims generated by their conception of the ideal human life (in Aristotelian terms, of 'what each of us is').¹³¹ But the complex nature of the resolution offered indicates the seriousness of the issue raised for the theories, one that, as I have suggested is, in some ways, more profound than that posed by the psycho-ethical conflicts connected with the problematic heroes of the poetic tradition.¹³²

However, from a larger historico-cultural and conceptual standpoint, which is the standpoint from which MacIntyre and Williams view the question, their account of the matter may not be wholly unjustified. Although Aristotle and Plato highlight the substantive nature of this conflict, they both offer forms of resolution, and ones which do not negate the value of the activity that is not given ultimate priority. Aristotle, for instance, even in stating his preference for the 'divine' version of 'what each of us is', can be seen as responding to the other-related and practical claims which are associated more obviously with the 'human' version of this idea.¹³³ To the extent that he offers us a single, though complex, position, he may seem (though in a more dialectical fashion than these modern thinkers suppose)¹³⁴ to be offering a unified, and, by implication, at

¹³⁰ See 4.6 and 5.6, text to nn. 227–58, 260–77 above.

¹³¹ See 5.7 above, text to nn. 329–64.

¹³² 4.7 above, text to nn. 290–2.

¹³³ A key point is that sharing with others the truth (as it is seen) that reflectively based knowledge is the highest possible form of human life is the most profound way to benefit others. See above 4.7, text to nn. 281–9; 5.6 above, text to nn. 252–62; 5.7, text to nn. 325–8.

¹³⁴ Williams (1985) does not address explicitly the problem posed by *NE* 10. 7–8. MacIntyre (1988), 141–3, does so briefly, but only to reaffirm his earlier view (1985), 163–4, that Aristotle has no sense of the 'tragic' idea that there can be *fundamentally* competing ethical claims (for a different view of the relationship between Greek tragic and epic poetry and philosophy on this point, see text to n. 132 above). On the dia-

least, moral-cum-metaphysical world-view.¹³⁵ Put in terms more congenial to my project, he is suggesting that, if human beings pursue to the limit the kind of debate that expresses their deepest understanding of their capacities as interactive and reflective animals, they can reach a conclusion that is, arguably, true *for* anyone even if it is not fully intelligible *to* anyone.¹³⁶ In the modern situation, Williams and MacIntyre suggest, for rather different reasons, this is not a credible conclusion. We do not have the conceptual and cultural framework that legitimates a single account of what it is to be normatively 'human' or a 'person'. Nor do we have an agreed procedure by which to integrate our understanding of ourselves as natural entities with that of ourselves as moral or metaphysical entities.¹³⁷ Hence, Aristotle, like other Greek thinkers, can reach an integrated conception of what it is to be human in a way that we cannot.

But is their picture of the modern situation, and thus of the contrast with Greek thought, true? Obviously, this question cannot be pursued very far in a book of this type; but it is possible to explore the claims made by MacIntyre (1991) in a way that relates to my more immediate concerns. MacIntyre claims there that the modern 'rift . . . between the sphere of the natural sciences, on the one hand, and that of moral concepts and judgements, on the other', combined with the lack of any communal or cosmic framework for moral concepts, makes it impossible to legitimate a single conception of 'person' (192–3). This comment, clearly, applies with full force to the project of trying to draw credible connections between the ex-Christian, post-Darwinian idea of the human being as a biological

lectical character of Aristotle's argument in *NE* 10. 7–8, see 5.6 above, text to nn. 288–91 and text to nn. 114–16 above; MacIntyre (1988), 100–1, also presents Aristotle's philosophizing in general as a dialectical (i.e. non-definitive) mode of argument directed (ultimately) at discovering objective truth, but does not cite this feature in connection with *NE* 10. 7–8

¹³⁵ See text to nn. 114–15 above.

¹³⁶ For the distinction between what is true *for* anyone and what is intelligible and convincing *to* anyone, and for a broadly similar view of the nature and limits of Aristotle's objectives to that given in the text (though not couched in terms of continuing debate), see Williams (1985), 39–40; see further on this issue 6.6 below, esp. text to nn. 161–94.

¹³⁷ See Williams (1985), 52–3, also 43–7, 152–5; MacIntyre (1991), 188–9, 192–3. On MacIntyre (1985), see Gill (1990c), 154–5; see also MacIntyre (1988), chs. 1 and 20, on the conceptual impossibility of achieving the kind of knowledge that goes beyond the limits of a specific intellectual tradition (including the view of human nature and rationality offered in that tradition).

phenomenon and the post-Cartesian and post-Kantian idea of the 'person' as a locus of 'I'-centred subjectivity and of rational autonomy.¹³⁸ But it is not clear that MacIntyre's charge of philosophical incoherence applies equally to all modern attempts to correlate the norm of personhood with the facts of human and non-human psychology.

I have noted earlier Wilkes's assertion that the study of personal identity should combine (what I am calling) an 'objectivist' (non-subject-centred) psychological model with a broadly empirical approach to human and non-human psychology; this project is not, I think, incoherent in the way that the project described by MacIntyre is.¹³⁹ Elsewhere, I have discussed the contributions by Dennett and Davidson to contemporary debate about how to apply criteria of personhood (or of being 'rational animals') to human and non-human psychological functions. Their discussions also combine 'objectivist' psychological models with a broadly empirical understanding of these functions, and they seem no more liable to the charge of conceptual incoherence than is Wilkes's approach. I have suggested that these discussions are broadly comparable, in the normative criteria applied, to Aristotelian and Stoic attempts to discriminate between human and non-human (or rational and non-rational) psychology; and similar points could be made about the methodology applied in these discussions.¹⁴⁰ In this area at least, it does not seem to me that there is the deep conceptual cleavage between ancient and modern thinking that MacIntyre identifies.

The kind of thinking about normative ideals that we find in Aristotle *NE* 1.7 and 10.7–8 is, clearly, more complex and ambitious than the type treated in this earlier discussion (Gill, 1991); and it raises more profound questions about the relationship between ancient and modern philosophical outlooks. In any modern parallel to these discussions, we should need to find not just the combination of an 'objective' psychological model with a methodology that is, in some sense, 'objectivist'. We should also need this to be combined with ethical 'objectivism' (linked with a stress on the role of interactive and reflective 'participation'). We should,

¹³⁸ See MacIntyre (1991), 188–9, 192–3; see also n. 102 above.

¹³⁹ See 6.4 above, text to nn. 73–4.

¹⁴⁰ Gill (1991). The potential relevance of these modern theories to understanding the categories of the ancient debate is also noted by Sorabji (1993), 28, 68. For a more negative appraisal of the relevance of modern functionalism (as deployed by Dennett and others) to Greek psychological theories, see Ostenfeld (1987), 55–68.

perhaps, also need this methodology to be couched in terms of an understanding of 'nature', in some sense. In Davidson's case, despite his evident interest in Greek ethical psychology and dialectical method, his intersubjective approach to ethical epistemology sets limits to the connections that can be drawn.¹⁴¹ Also, although I have here taken Wiggins as an example of a modern thinker who also underlines the crucial role of 'participation', in various senses, to the understanding of normative concepts, I do not want to claim that we find in his thinking the full range of features that I have identified in the Greek theories.¹⁴² On the other hand, if the methodology of the Greek theories is analysed as I have done here, it seems to me far from clear that it would be culturally and conceptually impossible to find such a combination in modern thought. A crucial point, stressed already, is that the relevant understanding of 'nature' should be based on the combination of (1) the development of an ethically good character and (2) ethical reflection which (implicitly or explicitly) informs, and is informed by, the study of the natural world. In other words, to re-emphasize this point, an 'objective' understanding of the ethical significance of the ideas of being 'human' and so forth depends on these forms of interactive and reflective participation.¹⁴³ The question of whether this set of conditions can be translated into the terms of contemporary philosophical debate is not one that I can attempt to answer here. But, on the face of it, it is not obvious that the answer to this question is a negative one.¹⁴⁴

6.6 BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR BECOMING FULLY 'HUMAN'

In the following and final section of this chapter (6.7), I pursue the implications of the questions just raised for understanding the

¹⁴¹ See Davidson (1980), Essay 2; the linkage between the general character of Davidson's thinking on 'weakness of will' and that of the Greek theories is underlined by Gosling (1990), ch. 8. See Davidson (1985a) on Platonic dialectic; and, on the epistemological differences between Davidson and Socrates/Plato, see Scaltsas (1989).

¹⁴² See 6.4 above, text to nn. 78–80; and text to nn. 119–21 above.

¹⁴³ On the conditions outlined, see text to nn. 122–4 above.

¹⁴⁴ What is at issue is whether a theory of *this general type* is compatible with any well-developed strands in modern philosophy, not whether any specific Greek version of this type of theory is compatible with modern philosophical thinking. For an analogous clarification, responding to criticisms of MacIntyre's proposal that we should re-adopt a (broadly) Aristotelian ethical framework, see MacIntyre (1985, 1st edn. 1981), 'Postscript', 272–8, esp. 276–7.

nature of my enquiry here and the status of the categories used, especially the contrast between 'objective-participant' and 'subjective-individualist' conceptions of the person. First, however, I draw out a point which is implied by the preconditions laid down by Greek philosophers for full understanding of what it is to be normatively human, which are also the preconditions for achieving this status fully in one's character and life.¹⁴⁵ The point is that, although it may be, at some level, an essential capacity of all human beings to achieve this understanding (and, thus, to achieve the normative state of character),¹⁴⁶ the actualization of this capacity depends on the extent to which they are enabled to participate effectively in the relevant types of interactive and reflective discourse. It follows that, in fact, some (indeed, many) human beings will be prevented from reaching this understanding because of the limited extent to which, because of the contingent circumstances of their social or intellectual life, they have been enabled to engage in these types of dialogue.

To defend this claim fully, I would need to situate this theme in the larger context of Greek philosophical thinking on (what we call) the issue of free will and determinism and explore the implications for this issue also of the idea of an 'objective-participant' conception of personality.¹⁴⁷ Here, however, I seek simply to exemplify this approach by focusing on one key text, the end of Book 9 of the *Republic*. This text has sometimes been taken to express a substantively different view from that just stated about the extent to which people are responsible for achieving, or failing to achieve, normative status, and about the process involved in doing so. This different view, and the conceptual framework that underlies it, has an independent interest for this enquiry. We find, in connection with this further topic, the kind of debate between (roughly) Kantian and anti-Kantian approaches which has figured prominently in this book, and whose larger implications for my project are developed in the next section.

The idea that being responsible for your own actions is a standard

¹⁴⁵ On these preconditions, see above 6.4, text to nn. 104–7, 114–21, 123–9.

¹⁴⁶ On this point, see 6.4 above, text to n. 123. The linkage between the achievement of the highest possible level of understanding and the best type of character holds good for all the Greek theories, in spite of the other differences between them noted in 6.4 above, text to nn. 123–9.

¹⁴⁷ I plan to do so elsewhere, with special reference to Hellenistic philosophy: Sorabji (1980b) surveys Aristotelian and Stoic thinking on this issue. For some provisional indications of the line of thought to be pursued, see text to nn. 165–73 below.

criterion of personhood is a long-standing one in modern philosophy.¹⁴⁸ However, modern thinkers sometimes identify as a mark of personhood a more complex type of responsibility, or freedom, which may be seen as underlying the capacity for taking responsibility for your own actions. This is that of being responsible, as an individual, for becoming the person that you have become, or being free to become the person that you want to become. As Charles Taylor points out, we can find versions of this idea in Sartre and Frankfurt,¹⁴⁹ and there is a still more famous version in Kant. The influence of this idea (and reactions against it) can be seen as shaping some contemporary readings of Greek philosophical thinking on our capacity to achieve normative human status.

As noted elsewhere, Kant conceives 'moral' decisions as those in which human beings exercise 'autonomy of the will' in subordinating themselves to universal principles which they legislate (or 'will') for themselves.¹⁵⁰ Underlying this idea is the metaphysical claim that human beings are, fundamentally, capable of exercising this kind of autonomy: this fundamental capacity is characterized as 'freedom of the will'. Kant combines this claim with the idea that, as natural creatures (part of the 'phenomenal' world), we are subject both to natural laws and to the desires and impulses which form part of our animal nature. But, as rational beings (part of the 'noumenal' world), we have the capacity for non-natural ('transcendental') freedom of the will, which is properly exercised in autonomy of the will.¹⁵¹ Like some other features of Kant's theory, this idea may be seen, from a historico-cultural standpoint, as a secularized version of an idea that has played a prominent role in Christian thought since Augustine. This is that, whatever our contingent failings, none of us falls outside the reach of God's grace; and that all human beings, as such, have a will that is free to respond to this grace.¹⁵² However, Kant's claim is

¹⁴⁸ See e.g. Locke's definition of 'person', 1.1 above, text to n. 19.

¹⁴⁹ C. Taylor (1976), 281–2, 289–94. On Frankfurt, see 6.3 above, text to n. 42. As noted there, freedom of the will, in Frankfurt's sense (having the desires one wants) is not, strictly, criterial of personhood; the criterion is rather that of having second-order desires at all, whether or not these are effective in shaping first-order desires. But personhood, in Frankfurt's sense, is most fully realized by the exercise of 'freedom of the will' (in his sense).

¹⁵⁰ See above, 1.1, text to nn. 26–30; 4.2, text to nn. 9–10; 4.3, text to n. 82.

¹⁵¹ See Kant, *ML*, pp. 107–15, taken with 101–6.

¹⁵² For this way of understanding Kant's claim, see Williams (1973a), 235. On Augustine's thinking on free will and divine grace (presented as substantively different from the understanding of 'wishing' and 'willing' in Classical philosophy), see

presented as a purely philosophical thesis, and, as such, despite its massively problematic character, it has been hugely influential.

Kant's position, as in other aspects of his moral theory, can be described, in my terms, as 'objectivist-individualist', in the sense that it combines a focus on the (individual) moral agent with the idea that the agent, when acting properly, subordinates herself to universal, objectively valid laws.¹⁵³ However, it is possible to see in modern philosophy after Kant *subjectivist*-individualist versions of this theme. Sartre, for instance, claims that it is fundamental to our (human) existence as self-conscious agents that we are capable of exercising *radical* moral choice, that is, of choosing what our central moral values are, and that we should realize our nature by exercising this capacity.¹⁵⁴ Nietzsche makes similar claims about our ability, as human beings, to engage in 'self-creation', that is, to realize our unique individuality, regardless of whether this does or does not correspond with conventional moral norms.¹⁵⁵

However, the kind of development of Kant's theory that concerns me here is, rather, that found in a discussion of the theory by Irwin (1984). Irwin, following the nineteenth-century philosopher, T. H. Green, offers a reformulated and more 'naturalistic' version of Kant's theory. Irwin rejects both Kant's dualism (the radical contrast between humans as rational beings and as natural animals) and the correlated idea that all naturally caused motives should be classed as types of desire for pleasure (pp. 36–43). He suggests that Kant can find all that he needs to support the idea of autonomy of the will in the kind of 'freedom' that can be ascribed to the human being as rational, self-conscious agent. Such an agent can be conceived as capable (as part of her psycho-ethical life as a human being) of recognizing, and acting and feeling in line with, moral rather than sensuous motives (pp. 45–51). A key part of Irwin's modified Kantian theory is the idea of a process of ethical development by which a person comes to see that her self-realization, as a rational agent, involves actualizing the kind of self that is impartially con-

Dihle (1982), ch. 6, esp. 123–32, 143–4. On other possible links between Kant's moral theory and Christian thought, see 5.3 above, text to n. 59.

¹⁵³ For Kant's position, by contrast with that of some subsequent modern philosophers, see above 2.5, text to nn. 100–4; 4.5, text to nn. 134–6. On the terms 'subjectivist', 'objectivist', see *Intro.* n. 21.

¹⁵⁴ See e.g. Kerner (1990), chs. 14–16, Dilman (1991); see also, criticizing Sartre's position, C. Taylor (1976), 289–94, (1977), 118–24.

¹⁵⁵ See 2.3 above, text to nn. 46–8.

cerned with the good of other rational agents. Irwin suggests that, in this way, Kant would have been able to provide a picture of moral life that could support the idea of autonomy of the will without introducing the problematic split between noumenal and phenomenal worlds.¹⁵⁶

Irwin's discussion has a special interest for this study in that his reformulated version of Kant's theory, based on T. H. Green, is similar in general form to that which he deploys in connection with both Plato and Aristotle. The idea of a process of ethical development, by which the rational agent comes to see altruistic concern as a central component of his own self-realization, is one that he offers as part of his supplementation of Plato's account of the role of reflection in the *Republic* and that he thinks is explicit in Aristotle's ethical theory. Engberg-Pedersen offers a similar idea in connection with the Stoic theory of human ethical development.¹⁵⁷ Discussing their interpretations in Chapter 5, I suggested that these were informed by ideas about ethical development and the function of ethical reflection which were derived from modern philosophy since Kant.¹⁵⁸ The parallels between Irwin's use of T. H. Green to reformulate Kant's theory and his accounts of the Greek theories illustrate this point further. I also suggested earlier that such modern models may have helped to shape the view of these scholars that the Greek theories, in effect, attribute an 'Archimedean' role to ethical reflection. In their accounts, these theories seek to show *anyone* that, as a rational agent, she has reason to realize herself by being morally good and benefiting others.¹⁵⁹ The relevance of this point here is that these interpretations ascribe to the Greek theories, by implication at least, a version of the capacity sometimes presented as criterial of personhood in modern philosophy since Kant. This is the capacity for being responsible for achieving (or free to achieve) the status presented as normative by the theory, a capacity analysed in different forms by Kant, Sartre, and T. H. Green.¹⁶⁰ For the Greek theories, as interpreted by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, to be human is to be, potentially at least, the kind of rational agent who is able to respond

¹⁵⁶ Irwin (1984), 51–6, esp. 52–4. Irwin's programme of rational self-realization is designed to explain the rational being's (autonomous) self-subordination to the two versions of the categorical imperative (on which, see Kant, *ML*, pp. 84, 90–1).

¹⁵⁷ See above 4.5, text to nn. 121–32; 5.2.

¹⁵⁸ See 5.3 above, text to nn. 68–74.

¹⁵⁹ See above 5.2, text to nn. 13–14, 24–6, 43, 50; also 5.3, text to nn. 68–74.

¹⁶⁰ See text to nn. 149–56 above.

positively to this type of picture of what rational self-realization involves, and to be able to shape her life accordingly.

It is also interesting that a similar reading of, at least, Platonic thinking is offered, from a very different philosophical standpoint, by Williams. It is Williams from whom I have borrowed the idea (which he sees as illusory) that ethical theory can serve as an 'Archimedean' point in persuading *anyone* to be morally good. Williams takes Plato, in the *Republic*, for instance, to be meeting Socrates' 'demand to show to *each* person that justice was rational for *that person*' by offering 'an account of what sort of person it was rational to be'.¹⁶¹ This can be taken with Williams's characterization as 'Platonic' the 'assumption that the reflective agent as theorist can make himself independent from the life and character [his own] he is examining' in a way that can enable him radically to reshape his life and character.¹⁶² Williams connects this feature of Platonic thought with Kantian or post-Kantian ideas, as comes out clearly in this passage.

This [Kantian] ideal [that of the total coincidence of rationality and freedom] involves an idea of ultimate freedom, according to which I am not entirely free so long as there is any ethically significant aspect of myself that belongs to me simply as a result of the process by which I was contingently formed. If my values are mine simply in virtue of social and psychological processes to which I have been exposed . . . I cannot be a fully free, rational, and responsible agent . . . [This Kantian ideal] presupposes a Platonic idea of the moral self as characterless . . . [an idea which] is implicit in the aspiration to a total critique. If the aspiration makes sense, then the criticising self can be separated from everything that the person contingently is—in itself, the criticising self is simply the perspective of reason or morality.¹⁶³

Williams also notes, critically, Aristotle's apparently comparable belief that 'you might review the whole of your life and consider whether it was aimed in the most worthwhile direction'. But, in Aristotle's case, by contrast with Plato's, Williams thinks that this belief is incompatible with 'an account of moral development in terms of habituation and internalization that leaves little room for

¹⁶¹ Williams (1985), 31, his italics, taken with 28–9. See also Williams (1981), 245–6.

¹⁶² Williams (1985), 110; see further 4.5 above, text to nn. 165–8, and n. 165, including refs. to Nussbaum (1986).

¹⁶³ Williams (1993), 158–9, also 94–5, 100.

practical reason to alter radically the objectives that a grown-up person has acquired'.¹⁶⁴

I think that Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, and Williams, from their different standpoints, have been influenced, in their readings of the Greek theories on this point, by a broadly Kantian pattern of thinking about the individual's capacity to realize (and responsibility for realizing) the normative moral state. (In Williams's case, his reading is shaped by his reaction *against* the Kantian pattern of thinking.) However, I suggest that the patterns of Greek thinking discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and summarized earlier in this chapter, imply the different conclusion stated at the start of this section.¹⁶⁵ To put the point in very general form, the implication of an 'objective-participant' (meaning, here, an 'objectivist-participant')¹⁶⁶ pattern of thinking about the person is that the achievement of the normative human state depends on the person's having participated effectively in interconnected forms of interactive and reflective discourse. Whether or not this is so (and whether or not she can do anything to correct the situation) does not depend wholly on the person herself, as an individual. It depends rather on the way in which her psycho-ethical state (the 'dialogue' within her psyche) has been shaped by the combination of interactive and reflective dialogue in a way that has, or has not, rendered her fully 'reason-ruled' in her state of character and understanding.¹⁶⁷

Thus, in the programme of psycho-ethical education in the *Republic* and in Aristotle's thinking about 'what each of us is', I have underlined the (complex) interplay between interactive exchange and reflective dialogue, of which the ideal outcome is a combination of post-dialectical understanding of what it means to be normatively

¹⁶⁴ Williams (1985), 38–9. For a reading of Aristotle's ethical thinking that presents these two aspects (habitative development shaped by interactive discourse and reflective debate) as part of a consistent, though complex, theory, see above 4.4, text to nn. 112–19; 5.4–6.

¹⁶⁵ See text to nn. 145–6 above taken with 6.5 above, text to nn. 106–29.

¹⁶⁶ i.e. a pattern of thinking according to which there are (in principle) objectively determinable norms for the process of human psycho-ethical development and its outcome. Contrast e.g. the 'subjectivist-individualist' pattern of thinking on this topic outlined in text to nn. 154–5 above; and, on the status of these categories, see 6.7 below.

¹⁶⁷ On the image of 'the self in dialogue' (associated with the three types of dialogue), see e.g. *Introd.*, text to nn. 39–45; for the idea that human beings can, in principle, become fully 'reason-ruled' through participation in the relevant types, and combination, of dialogue, see e.g. above 4.1, text to nn. 2–3; 4.2, text to nn. 38–65; 5.7, text to nn. 312–20.

human¹⁶⁸ and the correlated state of character and way of life. This general pattern also applies, with the variations noted earlier, to the Stoic and Epicurean theories.¹⁶⁹ As I have suggested, this pattern can also be seen as underlying the criteria used by some Greek philosophers to distinguish human from non-human (or rational from non-rational) animals.¹⁷⁰ However, the pattern in its complete form is, clearly, an ideal or normative one. Even if Greek philosophers sometimes state or imply that all human beings, as such, have the capacity to carry through the required programme,¹⁷¹ they do not, I think, standardly couple this with the claim that human beings, as individual agents, are wholly responsible for whether or not they have carried it through. All the Greek thinkers discussed in this book underline, in different ways, their awareness of the extent to which human beings can be disabled from gaining a proper understanding of ethical norms by the false action-guiding beliefs promoted by (some) interactive and reflective discourse in human societies.¹⁷² Plato, Epicurus, and the Stoics, especially, also stress the idea that philosophy can and should seek to counteract this process, particularly by the use of types of 'therapeutic' discourse, the general function of which is to replace false action-guiding beliefs with true ones. But they are also all well aware of the social and psycho-ethical difficulties that may counteract the work of this therapeutic discourse. Thus, they do not standardly claim that human beings are responsible, as individuals, for their success and failure in reaching the normatively human state by responding, or failing to respond, to such therapeutic discourse.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ The outcome of this process is presented as yielding this type of understanding in *NE* 10. 7–8 (see 5.6 above). In *R.*, this may plausibly be seen as a by-product of the kind of knowledge provided by the ideal programme (that of the Form of the Good, 4.5 above, text to nn. 147–53).

¹⁶⁹ See 6.5 above, text to nn. 123–9; also 5.7 above, text to nn. 329–64.

¹⁷⁰ On Aristotelian, Stoic, and Platonic thinking, see 6.3 above, text to nn. 44–57. For key Epicurean texts, see Sedley (1983); also *LS* 20 B, C.

¹⁷¹ This theme is strongly marked in Stoic theory, and closely associated with the idea of *oikeiosis*, seen as a 'natural' process of ethical development. See e.g. *LS* 57A, B, E, F, encapsulated in *LS* 61L: '[Cleanthes says] All men have natural tendencies [*ἀφ' οὐμᾶς*] to virtue'.

¹⁷² On Plato and Aristotle, see above 4.4, text to nn. 112–19, taken with 4.2, text to nn. 54–65. Chrysippus specifies 'the communication of the many' (*κατὰ χηρείας τῶν πολλῶν*) as one of the two key sources of *pathe* (unreasonable responses based on false action-guiding beliefs), *Gal. PHP* 5. 5. 14, pp. 320–1 De Lacy. See also the Epicurean Diogenes of Oenoanda, fr. 3–4 Chilton, cited by Nussbaum (1986), 51.

¹⁷³ On 'therapeutic' discourse in general, see Nussbaum (1994), esp. chs. 1, 4, 9–10. See esp. *Pl. Grg.* 475d, 505c, *Sophist* 230c–d; *Gal. PHP* 5. 2. 21–4, pp. 298–9 De Lacy.

As indicated earlier (text to n. 147 above), I do not undertake here to defend in general terms these claims about Greek thinking, though I plan to do so elsewhere. I focus, rather, on a passage from Plato's *Republic*, which is of particular relevance here since it centres on the ethical significance of adopting a specific view of what it means to be, normatively, 'human'.¹⁷⁴ The passage is also of special interest because it might seem to support the picture of Greek thinking on this topic offered, from different standpoints, by Irwin and Williams. At the close of *R.* 9, Plato's Socrates, reverting to the starting-point of the whole discussion, uses an image of the human psyche, as a combination of human being, lion, and many-headed beast, to illustrate what is involved in the claim that 'injustice pays', and to reinforce the contrasting claims made in the preceding argument about the desirability of the reason-ruled, rather than the tyrannized, psyche.¹⁷⁵ On the face of it, this passage seems to bear out Williams's view that the *Republic* is designed 'to show to each person that justice was rational for that person'.¹⁷⁶ It is the 'immoralist' position that is being confronted, and the spokesperson for that position, Thrasymachus, is referred to explicitly in the course of the discussion.¹⁷⁷ Also, the general form of the argument is that of urging the listener consciously to promote one set of internal relationships (one form of interplay between the parts of the psyche) rather than another.¹⁷⁸ This form of presentation seems to bear out Irwin's account of the role of rational reflection, namely as a self-conscious critique of one's motivating goals, designed to achieve the best possible form of self-realization.¹⁷⁹ This form of presentation may seem to confirm the view, shared by Irwin and Williams, that what is advocated is a form of self-management which is available to

On the problems of applying therapeutic discourse effectively (and on the psychological issues raised for Stoic thinking), see *LS* 65O–R. The Stoic Epictetus goes furthest in claiming that it is 'up to us' whether or not we respond to the therapeutic discourse of philosophy: see further Long (1971a), 189–92, (1991), 111–17; and Hahn (1992), 30–43.

¹⁷⁴ Thus, the passage relates to the issues discussed in 6.5 above. The reading of the passage in text to nn. 175–94 below develops that of Gill (1990c), 159–60.

¹⁷⁵ *R.* 588b–592b; see also 343c–345b, 357b–367e, 586a–588a.

¹⁷⁶ Williams (1985), 31; see also text to n. 161 above.

¹⁷⁷ *R.* 588e5–589a, 589c–591a, including reference to Thrasymachus in 590d1–2 (alluding to 343b–344c).

¹⁷⁸ See esp. *R.* 588e5–589b6, 589c8–d3, e4–5, 590a9–d6, 591c1–d3, 591e1–592a4.

¹⁷⁹ Irwin (1977), 244–5, taken with 246–8; (1995), 312–13, taken with 288–302; see further above 4.5, text to nn. 121–30; 5.2, text to nn. 12–14.

each person as well as being desirable 'for each person', if he is to realize what it means to be fully human.¹⁸⁰

However, closer attention to the specific form of the dialogue (which, here, as elsewhere in Plato, carries a precise philosophical significance)¹⁸¹ does not, I think, bear out this reading of the passage. Although Socrates speaks about 'talking to' or 'persuading' the immoralist, he does not address Thrasymachus directly, despite reminding us of his continued presence (590d). Instead, the dialogue takes the form of Socrates using Glaucon as his collaborator in an imagined attempt to persuade the immoralist: Glaucon first answers on behalf of the immoralist, and then gradually replaces him as interlocutor, as the fictional act of persuasion is abandoned.¹⁸² In effect, Socrates does not attempt to talk *to* the immoralist, though he discusses with Glaucon what is true *for* him. To gauge the significance of this point, we should recall that Glaucon and Adeimantus enter the discussion (after the virtual breakdown of effective dialogue with Thrasymachus) as being people of good character (*tropos*), who are pre-reflectively disposed to believe that justice is preferable to injustice, but require arguments to substantiate this belief. Thus, they are like well-trained auxiliaries in the ideal state who (in Aristotle's terms) possess 'the that' but not 'the why'.¹⁸³

The kind of discussion which Socrates has with this kind of interlocutor at the end of *R.* 9 is not plausibly interpreted as 'Archimedean', either in form or content. For instance, there is no attempt to show that the conception of 'human' (sometimes replaced by 'divine') in Socrates' model of the psyche is one that is universally valid, regardless whether or not one accepts already the ethical content of the ideas conveyed in this image.¹⁸⁴ In other words, the conception of 'human' or 'divine' is not presented as, in Williams's

¹⁸⁰ See Williams (1985), 40 (on Aristotle), taken with p. 31; on Irwin, see refs. in n. 159 above.

¹⁸¹ See also 4.5 above, text to n. 151 and refs. in n. 151. For approaches to the significance of dialogue form in Plato, see, e.g. Griswold (1988), Klagge and Smith (1992), Gill and McCabe (1996). D. Frede (1996) is especially attentive to the type of feature discussed here; see also Gill (1995), esp. 292–7.

¹⁸² *R.* 588e3–589a6, c6–d3, 590a3–4.

¹⁸³ *R.* 368a–b, esp. a6–7, b2; the breakdown of real dialogue with Thrasymachus is signalled at 350d–e, 352b3–4, 354a10–13. See also 4.4 above, text to nn. 98–119.

¹⁸⁴ *R.* 588d–589b (human), 589d1–2 (human or divine), 589e4–5, 590d1–4 (divine); the shift from 'human' to 'divine' coincides, perhaps significantly, with Glaucon's undertaking to answer 'on behalf of' the immoralist (590a3–4). For this type of question (whether a conception of human nature is designed to carry 'Archimedean weight') see text to nn. 159–64 above.

words in another context, 'recoverable from an absolute understanding of nature', in a way that does not presuppose the interlocutor's prior ethical engagement.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, the effectiveness of this image of the psyche depends on accepting the validity of the idea that the reasoning part (which plays, of course, a key role in Plato's psycho-ethical model) is plausibly regarded as the 'human' or 'divine' part of us.¹⁸⁶ Also, the dialogue with Glaucon (acting on behalf of, or instead of, the immoralist) is used to draw out implications of the image of the psyche which no immoralist could be expected to accept. It is argued that conventional praise of justice and dispraise of injustice are validated by understanding the effect which just and unjust acts have on the psyche of the person committing them.¹⁸⁷ Socrates also develops (with explicit allusion to Thrasymachus) certain problematic implications of his model such as the idea that those who are incapable of directing themselves in line with reason's rule should be directed 'from outside', and that it is psycho-ethically beneficial for the wrongdoer to be improved by punishment.¹⁸⁸ These are not ideas which can easily be seen as forming part of a dialogue which is designed to prove to *anyone* that she has reason to be ethically good.

My reading of the implications of this passage can be stated in terms of the three types of dialogue that I am associating with the image of 'the self in dialogue'. One way of describing at least part of the function of the passage is that it shows how reflective debate can validate the kind of 'dialogue' between parts of the psyche promoted by conventional action-guiding discourse (that of ethical praise and blame).¹⁸⁹ However, the function of reflective debate is not 'Archimedean', because the passage suggests, by its choice of interlocutor,

¹⁸⁵ Williams (1985), 52; see 6.5 above, text to nn. 91–100.

¹⁸⁶ For a similar claim about Aristotle's use of the idea of 'human' or 'divine' see 6.5 above, text to nn. 100, 112, 118. On the (complex) role of 'reason' in Plato's model, see above, 4.2, text to nn. 35–7; 4.6, text to nn. 210–13. Thus, I accept Williams's view that Plato's tripartite model is 'ethicised' (1993, 42–4), but do not find this point problematic in the way that he does.

¹⁸⁷ *R.* 589c–590c; contrast Thrasymachus' rejection of such conventional ethical judgements in 348c–e.

¹⁸⁸ *R.* 590c8–d6 (the force of which is only partly mitigated by the more conventional 590e1–591a3), including reference to Thrasymachus in 590d2–3; 591a10–b7 (cf. *Grg.* 476b–481b). A possible way of understanding *R.* 590c8–d6 is that the rational direction that Socrates has in view is the kind of post-dialectical shaping of action-guiding beliefs attributed to the philosopher-rulers in the ideal state (see above 4.5, text to nn. 138–53; 4.6, text to nn. 189–95, 206–20) rather than the direction of practical decision-making. But this line of interpretation is not likely to make the idea any more acceptable to an immoralist such as Thrasymachus.

¹⁸⁹ See text to n. 187 above, taken with refs. in n. 178 above.

and by the mode and content of the argument, one of the key implications of the ideal educational programme. This is that reflective debate (culminating in post-dialectical knowledge) can play a substantive role in reshaping the psycho-ethical state which is the outcome of (even well-conducted) interactive discourse. But this is so if, and only if, such reflective debate is grounded, for both parties involved, on a foundation of belief-based ethical dispositions established by such interactive discourse.¹⁹⁰

This conclusion might seem to be contradicted by the suggestion at the end of the passage that we should use the psycho-ethical pattern illustrated by the ideal state and use this to shape our own character, regardless of the ethical quality of the state in which we live.¹⁹¹ However, if this conclusion is consistent with the whole thrust of the argument of the *Republic*, and with the preceding exchange between Socrates and Glaucon, as I interpret this, the point cannot be that *anyone* is free to reshape her character by the unaided use of reason. If we are to follow Socrates' advice to use the ideal state as a model (*paradeigma*) to 'establish' or 'settle' (*katoikizein*) ourselves (592b2–3), we must do so in a way that is compatible with the psycho-ethical programme embodied in that ideal state. Socrates' advice at the end of Book 9 cannot negate the earlier indications that the ideal psycho-ethical pattern cannot be achieved, or even grasped, fully without the prior existence of the ideal state and the educational programme that this provides.¹⁹² What the passage recommends, if it is in line with the whole thrust of the preceding argument, is that we should seek to shape our character and life in the general form exhibited in the ideal state, that is, by using reflective debate to build on whatever valid foundations have been laid by pre-reflective engagement, as Glaucon does in responding to Socrates' dialectical defence of justice.¹⁹³ Hence, this concluding point, like the passage as a whole, need not be taken as expressing the thought that we are free wholly to reshape our

¹⁹⁰ See above 4.4, text to nn. 92–119; 4.5, text to nn. 138–49, 171–3; 4.6, text to nn. 189–220.

¹⁹¹ 591c–592b, esp. 591e1, 592b2–3.

¹⁹² See 4.5 above, text to n. 151, and refs. in n. 151. The crux that derives from this point is this: how can such a state come into being if the state's prior existence is the precondition for understanding its key principles? (See above 4.4, text to n. 119; 4.5, text to n. 173.) This crux underlies the readiness in *R.* 592c10–b6 to acknowledge that this state may never exist.

¹⁹³ See text to nn. 183–6 above. An implied precondition is that we (Plato's readers) should be like Glaucon rather than Thrasymachus. See also n. 194 below.

character by the unaided use of reflective reason (in the way that Williams suggests),¹⁹⁴ and that Plato's argument is designed to serve this function.

6.7 CONCLUSION: MODELS AND PROJECT

In the final section of this book, I reflect in general terms on the intellectual status of the categories that I have been using to analyse Greek thinking about the person (especially the contrast between objective-participant and subjective-individualist conceptions), and also on the nature and objectives of my enquiry.

I begin with a question which my presentation of the enquiry in the Introduction did not address explicitly. I have suggested that a series of topics in Greek thought can be interpreted most effectively by reference to three aspects of an 'objective-participant' conception of person. These aspects are: (1) an 'objective' (rather than an 'I'- or subject-centred) psychological model; (2) a 'participant' (rather than an 'individualist') ethical model; (3) an 'objectivist' (rather than 'subjectivist') understanding of psychological and ethical norms. I have also suggested that these ideas can be seen as making up an interconnected set. Thus, for instance, in Greek thought, as analysed in the light of this conception, psycho-ethical development (defined in 'objective' terms as the shaping of, for instance, belief-based dispositions) is conceived as taking place through participation in a combination of interactive and reflective dialogue. The specification of the norms applying to this process of development is conceived as amenable, in principle, to objective determination. The precondition for objective understanding of these norms is effective participation in certain specified kinds of interactive and reflective dialogue. In ways indicated earlier, these are also the preconditions for fulfilling, in one's own life, the normative process of development.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ See text to nn. 162–4 above. This reading of the end of *R.* is, arguably, reinforced by a feature of the myth at the end of *R.* 10 which is emphasized by Annas (1982), 132–4. This is that, having reiterated the importance of a 'choice of life' based on the preceding argument (618c–619a, cf. 591c–592b), Socrates shows that the souls in the afterlife typically choose their next lives in the light of their experience in their previous lives (620a–d, esp. a2–3). Demythologized, this implies, as Annas puts it (p. 132), 'that my character and way of life is as it is largely because of my family and political situation', a conclusion which is also suggested by the picture of the 'choices of life' made by the defective types in *R.* 8–9 (4.2 above, text to nn. 54–60).

¹⁹⁵ See above 6.4, text to nn. 84–90; 6.5, text to nn. 104–7, 114–21, 123–9.

These suggestions may prompt certain questions. What general claim underlies my procedure? Is it that the three aspects of this conception (the 'objective' psychological model, the 'participant' ethical model, the 'objectivist' approach to the determination of norms and knowledge) are *invariably* and necessarily interconnected or only interconnected in this way in Greek culture? Similarly, is the complex of features that I have taken as making up the contrasting subjective-individualist conception also to be taken as *invariably* interconnected? Is the objective-participant conception *invariably* expressed by the idea of the three interlinked types of dialogue that I have highlighted in discussing Greek thought;¹⁹⁶ or is this, again, to be conceived as a feature only of Greek culture?

I offer here answers to these questions; to do so, I need to develop certain points made in the Introduction about the general form, and the limits, of my project. I have not set out to provide a set of categories for analysing conceptions of personality across human cultures in general.¹⁹⁷ My project has been the more limited one of trying to understand, from our (contemporary) conceptual perspective, Greek thinking about (what we call) 'personality'. My key underlying thought is that, to understand Greek thinking better in this respect, we need to counteract the subjective, individualist, and subjective-individualist aspects of our own thinking on this subject, and to frame an objective-participant pattern of thinking. The ideas of 'objective-participant' and 'subjective-individualist' conceptions of the person are to be taken as 'bridgeheads' with which we, from our contemporary standpoint, can engage best in 'dialogue' with the conceptual framework of Greek culture.¹⁹⁸ For this purpose, I have drawn on several strands in modern psychological and ethical theory, and in the philosophy of personhood, which seem either instructively similar to or instructively different from significant features of Greek thought, in so far as they display some of the features that I am associating with 'objective-participant' or 'subjective-individualist' conceptions of the person.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ See above, e.g. *Introd.*, text to nn. 39–45; 3.1, text to nn. 1–2; 5.7, text to nn. 312–20; 6.6, text to nn. 178–90.

¹⁹⁷ On the question whether this is an intellectually defensible project, see e.g. Carrithers, Collins, and Lukes (1985), esp. Lukes (1985).

¹⁹⁸ On concepts as 'bridgeheads' see Lukes (1985), 297–8, and 6.2 above, text to n. 5.

¹⁹⁹ See *Introd.*, text to nn. 21–30. The choice of the concepts, and the thinkers, who provide the best available 'bridgeheads' with which to engage in 'dialogue' with Greek

Although some of the modern theories that I have drawn on for this purpose combine some of the elements that I see as making up the 'objective-participant' conception, no one modern theory combines all of them. For instance, Wilkes combines an 'objective' psychological model with (one version of) an 'objectivist' approach to the study of psychology, but this is not also combined with the 'objective-participant' approach to ethical thinking in the way that it is in Greek thinking.²⁰⁰ Although MacIntyre and Williams emphasize the 'participant' dimension of ethical life, both at the interactive and reflective level, they do not see this as forming the basis for an 'objectivist' position regarding ethical standards and knowledge, as do the Greek theories discussed.²⁰¹ Although I have suggested that Wiggins provides a modern parallel to Greek thinking about the role of both interactive and reflective participation in determining normative concepts, I have also noted certain salient differences between his thinking and that found in the Greek theories.²⁰² These observations about modern theory constitute at least a partial answer to the question raised earlier. The features that constitute the objective-participant conception of person are not *invariably* combined, as is clear from the fact that they are not combined in the modern theories cited, though these have been chosen for their similarity to Greek thinking in one or other of the relevant respects.

Similarly, the 'subjective-individualist' conception, as outlined in the Introduction is, explicitly, a combination of subjective, individualist, and subjective-individualist themes, not all of which are, or could be, maintained coherently as part of a single theory or framework of thinking.²⁰³ Correspondingly, none of the modern philosophical or scholarly approaches which I have used to define by contrast the character of the Greek theories displays *all* the features outlined as making up the 'subjective-individualist' conception in the Introduction. The contrast between this conception and the 'objective-participant' framework of thinking (as expressed in Greek

thought is, inevitably, controversial and cannot be separated wholly from the question of which philosophical position one finds most credible. See also *Introd.*, text to n. 48.

²⁰⁰ See above 1.2, text to nn. 38–41; 6.5, text to n. 139.

²⁰¹ More precisely, they see ethical reflection, if validly conducted, as necessarily grounded in interactive participation in a way that excludes the possibility of any *independent* (theory-based) objectivist grounding for ethical concepts. See 4.5 above, text to nn. 157–72 and text to nn. 239–43 below.

²⁰² See nn. 79 and 88 above.

²⁰³ See *Introd.*, text to n. 31.

thought) is strongest in the case of approaches that combine a subject-centred psychological model with a subjectivist-individualist ethical position, as is so, arguably, in the case of Sartre and Nietzsche, or of a scholar such as Whitman.²⁰⁴ Other modern positions, including some noted frequently in this book, express only one or more of the relevant features. These features are sometimes combined with those which also appear (in a rather different form) in the objective-participant framework. Thus, for instance, Kant's ethical position, by contrast with Sartre's, could be characterized as objectivist-individualist rather than subjectivist-individualist.²⁰⁵ The pattern of thinking about the role of ethical development ascribed by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen to Greek thinkers (in which rational self-realization is seen as including other-benefiting virtue) is 'subjective' in centring on the notion of 'self'-realization, but 'objectivist' in presupposing that there are objectively determinable norms for what constitutes properly rational self-realization.²⁰⁶

To this extent, my account of the objective-participant idea of person is shaped by a historical rather than philosophical objective: I have grouped together (as aspects of the objective-participant framework of thinking) those features of psychological and ethical thinking that (seem to me to) correspond to dominant features of Greek philosophical and poetic thinking.²⁰⁷ Similarly, my emphasis on the idea of the three interlinked types of dialogue is determined, primarily, by (what seems to me) the prominence, and significance, of this idea in Greek thought. It is true that the idea of displaying psychological motivation as a form of inner dialogue also occurs in at least one modern non-Cartesian theory, that of Dennett (his use of this image can be contrasted with the Cartesian picture of the mind as a locus of 'I'-centred 'light' and 'transparency').²⁰⁸ Also, the idea that interactive exchange and reflective debate can be signified by forms of dialogue, which can be seen as connected with each other as well as with the 'dialogue' within the psyche, is a rather obvious one, and could easily arise in other human cultures. But I do not pretend to be

²⁰⁴ See above 2.3, text to nn. 46–8; 2.5, text to nn. 98–109; 6.3, text to nn. 65–6; 6.6, text to nn. 154–5.

²⁰⁵ See above 1.1, text to nn. 27–30; 1.3, text to nn. 110–16; 6.6, text to nn. 150–5; ch. 2, nn. 45 and 105; and refs. in n. 204 above.

²⁰⁶ See above 4.5, text to nn. 121–37; 5.2; 5.3, text to nn. 67–74; 5.5, text to nn. 209–12, 235–7; 6.2, text to nn. 20–6; 6.6, text to nn. 156–9.

²⁰⁷ See refs. in n. 196 above.

²⁰⁸ See above 4.2, text to n. 52; ch. 1, n. 39.

able to say how widely in human cultures the image of inter-connected types of dialogue is associated with (what I am calling) an 'objective-participant' conception of psycho-ethical life. Nor can I distinguish readily between this type of explanation for the prevalence of this image in Greek thought and other features of Greek culture that might be cited in this connection (such as orality, or the centrality of contexts of discourse in socio-political life).²⁰⁹

However, I do not wish to suggest that the objective-participant and subjective-individualist conceptions, because they have been framed to define the character of a particular historical phenomenon (Greek thinking on what we call 'personality'), are to be regarded simply as patchworks of ideas, with no conceptual coherence. As indicated already, although no modern theory contains *all* the features taken to make up the two conceptions, *some* of the features combined in the two conceptions are also combined in some modern theories.²¹⁰ But, to bring out further the kind of coherence, and the kind of function, which these conceptions (particularly, the objective-participant one) are designed to have, I re-use the ideas of establishing 'bridgeheads' and engaging in 'dialogue', deployed earlier in this connection.²¹¹ My aim can be described as trying to establish, or to take further, three kinds of conceptual dialogue. One is that between modern thinking about 'personality' (in at least some of the senses of this term)²¹² and Greek thinking, both poetic and philosophical, about psychology and ethics. The objective-participant conception serves as a way of characterizing the points of connection between (certain strands of)²¹³ modern thinking and Greek thinking. Second, this conception is designed to underline connections between Greek poetic thinking and Greek philosophical thinking (especially, those derived from the combination of an 'objective' psychological model and a 'participant' ethical model). Third, and perhaps most controversially, the conception is designed to underline possible connections between the various aspects of the objective-participant conception, including that between a 'participant' ethical model and ethical objectivism. The

²⁰⁹ See *Introd.*, n. 45. As stated in *Introd.*, text to nn. 5–6, 13, I do not seek to situate this account of Greek thinking in a larger sociological or anthropological framework, though I do refer to some of the categories used in research of this type (e.g. that of 'reciprocity' in connection with ethical models).

²¹⁰ See text to nn. 200–2, 204 above.

²¹¹ See text to n. 198 above.

²¹² On the relevant senses, see *Introd.*, text to nn. 1–4, 34–5.

²¹³ On these strands, see n. 199 above; see further text to nn. 236–43 below.

latter combination is, in my view, found in Greek philosophy, though it is more open to argument whether it does, or could, figure in the same way in modern philosophy.²¹⁴

I consider two examples of the way in which these three forms of conceptual dialogue have worked together in this book in order to see how far these examples clarify my approach and illustrate the kind of coherence that I am claiming for the objective-participant conception of the person. I think that one of the most interesting points to emerge from the book (and one that was not wholly anticipated when I started to write it) is the parallel between the issues which arise in connection with the problematic heroes of Greek epic and tragedy and with the relationship between pre- and post-dialectical virtue in Greek philosophy.²¹⁵ This parallel has emerged by pursuing the implications of a combination of a 'participant' ethical model and an 'objective' (non-subject-centred) psychological model in each area. As regards the 'participant' ethical model, I have used the ideas of 'second-order' reasoning and of the 'exemplary gesture' to bring out the ways in which the poetic hero's stance or act, though massively problematic, can be seen as an intelligible response to the ethical beliefs that normally shape interpersonal and communal relationships in his social or familial context.²¹⁶ In the philosophical theories, an analogously problematic stance is adopted in Plato's *Symposium* and *Republic* and Aristotle's *NE* 10. 7–8. What is explicitly asserted or implied is that the reflective life rather than that of practical involvement in interpersonal and communal interchange represents the best possible human life. I have suggested that this stance needs to be placed in the context of theories which give ethical status to participation both in (the right kind of) interpersonal and communal involvement and in (the right kind of) reflective debate.²¹⁷ It needs also to be situated in an ethical framework centred on the ideas of the shared life and reciprocity rather than of altruism.²¹⁸ Against this background, I think that we can see the philosophers' stances not simply as a statement of what they see as being objectively true,²¹⁹ but also (and relatedly) as the way to

²¹⁴ On this point, see 6.5 above, esp. text to nn. 138–44.

²¹⁵ See above 3.6, text to nn. 232–47; 4.7; 5.6, text to nn. 263–9.

²¹⁶ See above 2.6; 2.8; 2.9, text to nn. 230–8, 261–6.

²¹⁷ See refs. in n. 220 below, taken with 4.4–5, 5.4–5 above.

²¹⁸ See 5.3 above, esp. text to nn. 78–86.

²¹⁹ See n. 220 below. In 4.7 above, text to nn. 272–4, I indicate the interpretative difficulties in claiming that the poetic presentation of the problematic heroes implies

confer the greatest possible benefit on others as well as oneself, namely by *communicating* what they take to be a profound truth of human life.²²⁰

Similar points arise in connection with the psycho-ethical thinking (the combination of an 'objective' psychological model and a 'participant' ethical model) that is associated with these analogous features of Greek poetry and philosophy. In both areas, the linkage between the psychological and the ethical models emerges most clearly in the idea that human feelings and desires are shaped, both on a short-term and long-term basis, by beliefs and reasoning, and are properly shaped by the most fully justified set of beliefs and reasoning.²²¹ Hence, several Greek poetic portrayals of self-division are analysed in Chapter 3 as manifestations of conflict about which ethical stance (which set of beliefs and reasoning) is more fully justified, rather than conflict between 'reason' (or 'will') and 'passion'.²²² The form of conflict on which I have focused especially in Greek poetry is that between the ethical stance, and correlated emotional reactions, justified by the conventional values of interpersonal and communal exchange and the understanding of those values which arises from the hero's reflective reasoning.²²³ In the philosophical theories, although self-division (in the form of *akrasia*, for instance) is not analysed in terms of the latter type of conflict, we do find other manifestations of this type of conflict.²²⁴ The mixed reactions of Plato's philosopher-rulers to the prospect of re-entering the cave constitute one example of this, reflecting Plato's complex (and perhaps ambivalent) account, in the *Republic*, of the relationship

ethical objectivism (this does not mean that we should, therefore, assume a subjectivist approach). This issue could not be pursued further without considering other factors, e.g. the shape of the relevant poetic works as a whole and their (apparent) role in the ethical discourse of their society, to a fuller extent than can be done here.

²²⁰ See above 4.6, text to nn. 206–13, 246–9, 258; 4.7, text to nn. 281–92; 5.3, text to n. 86; 5.6, text to nn. 252–4, 275–7, 286–9; 5.7, text to nn. 325–8.

²²¹ The emphasis on long-term psycho-ethical structures, those of 'character' or 'disposition' (*ethos*, *hexis*, or *diathesis*), is more evident in Greek ethical theory than in epic and tragedy, which focus rather on occurrent (short-term) affective states. But a belief-based model of affective states seems to be implied in both types of material: see above 1.2, text to nn. 66–97; 3.1, text to nn. 12–22; 4.2; 4.6, text to nn. 186–213.

²²² See above 3.1, text to nn. 13–14; 3.3, text to nn. 68–80, 98–100; 3.5, text to nn. 179–90; 3.6, text to nn. 191–231.

²²³ See above 3.1, text to n. 23; 3.3, text to nn. 81–5; 3.4, text to nn. 141–3; 3.5, text to nn. 154–6.

²²⁴ See 3.6 above, text to nn. 218–39.

between pre- and post-dialectical virtue.²²⁵ Analogously, the divergent but explicable way in which Aristotle, at different points, characterizes the idea of 'what each of us is' expresses in terms of psychological 'parts' a position on an issue of a similar type.²²⁶

In what way have these discussions exemplified the three kinds of 'dialogue' referred to earlier? I take it that it is clear from the preceding summary, as well as from the discussions themselves, how I have pursued the question of the relationship between an 'objective' psychological model, a 'participant' ethical model, and, in the philosophical cases, at least, ethical (or psycho-ethical) objectivism.²²⁷ What may need more explanation is the relationship between the conceptual and interpretative framework applied here and the modern philosophical positions taken as starting-points for the objective-participant conception. In a generalized way, this mode of interpretation expresses the stress on the 'participant' dimension of ethical life, found, in different forms, in MacIntyre and Williams, combined (in a still more generalized way) with the 'objective' (non-subject-centred) psychological model, of which I have identified several modern exemplars.²²⁸ The specific claims made about Greek poetry and philosophy, and the interpretative framework applied here, do not, for the most part, correspond in detail with what is said about Greek thought in, for instance, MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (1985) or Williams's *Shame and Necessity* (1993).²²⁹ But this book is, none the less, shaped by the thought that the ethical or psycho-ethical framework of thinking deployed in those works provides a better starting-point for pursuing these questions in Greek ethics and psychology than does a more subjective or individualist approach, based on post-Cartesian or post-Kantian approaches.²³⁰

There is one further aspect of the book's argument which I note here as exemplifying the interlinked kinds of 'dialogue' specified

²²⁵ See above 4.6, text to nn. 189–258, esp. text to nn. 226–9, 257–8; 4.7, text to nn. 262–7.

²²⁶ See 5.6 above, text to nn. 263–91; for a general characterization of the issue, see text to nn. 217–19 above.

²²⁷ On the last point, see n. 219 above.

²²⁸ See *Intro.*, text to nn. 15–23; 1.2, text to nn. 38–53, 94–104; 1.3, text to nn. 105–29; 3.2, text to nn. 41–3.

²²⁹ For positive use of these, and other, works by MacIntyre and Williams, see *Intro.*, text to nn. 22–5; 1.3, text to nn. 110–16, 120–9, 161–4; 1.4, text to nn. 172–5; 4.3, text to nn. 86–7. For more qualified or critical use of their work, see above 4.5, text to nn. 162–73; 6.5.

²³⁰ On this point, see text to nn. 236–43 below.

earlier,²³¹ an aspect which is related to that just discussed. In Chapters 4–6, while focusing on more specific questions, I have tried to bring out the general form of Greek ethical thinking, as I understand this,²³² and the conception of the person that is implied in this. In Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle, and some aspects of Stoic thinking, I have highlighted the idea that full human ethical development constitutes a two-stage process: first, the development of sound dispositions and ethico-practical reasoning through participation in interpersonal and communal exchange; then reflective debate leading (in principle) to objective ethical knowledge of a kind which can reshape one's character and way of life.²³³ In an alternative model, strongly marked in Epicurean thought, but of which there are versions in the other Greek theories discussed here, emphasis is placed rather on the thought that reflective debate (and its outcome) is a precondition for proper modes of interpersonal and communal engagement as well as for the shaping of character.²³⁴ In either model, the central idea can be taken to be that full human ethical development consists in participation in three interconnected kinds of dialogue. 'Wisdom' (understood as complete human virtue) is achieved through the right combination, or synthesis, of (the right kinds of) interpersonal exchange and reflective debate leading to post-reflective understanding of the nature of the fundamental principles of nature or reality, both of these contributing to the psycho-ethical shaping of character (the 'dialogue' within the psyche).²³⁵ This pattern represents one way in which the 'participant' ethical model (combined with an 'objective' (non-subject-centred) psychological model) is related to an objectivistic approach to psycho-ethical states. Objectivity, in the form of objective ethical knowledge (and the correlated objectively normative psycho-ethical state) is seen as being achieved through participation in the three kinds of dialogue described.

²³¹ See text to nn. 212–14 above.

²³² See 5.3 above, text to nn. 78–104.

²³³ For this broad division between types of Greek theory, see 5.3 above, text to nn. 87–99. See also above 4.4–6, esp. 4.6, text to nn. 181–3, 189–225 (Plato); 5.4–6, esp. 5.6, text to nn. 255–77 (Aristotle); 5.5, text to nn. 213–30, 5.7, text to nn. 363–4, 6.5, text to nn. 125–6 (Stoics).

²³⁴ See above 4.6, text to nn. 186–8, 206–13; 5.7, text to nn. 317–31, 339–59, 362; 6.5, text to nn. 127–8.

²³⁵ On these three types of dialogue, see refs. in n. 196 above. On the linkage between these types of participation and proper understanding of the ethical significance of nature or reality, see 6.5 above.

Much of my argument in Chapters 4–6 has been centred on a further type of conceptual ‘dialogue’, namely the project of forming (from our contemporary perspective) an interpretative approach that is appropriate for understanding this general form of ethical theory and the conception of the person that it expresses. I have argued against the idea that the Kantian theory provides the best available basis for this, despite the fact that this theory involves the idea of universality or objectivity both in its model of properly moral action and in the normative idea of the ‘rational being’.²³⁶ I have suggested that the Kantian theory is ‘individualist’ in that the properly moral stance is defined as a distinctively individual one (namely that of autonomy), and that the norm of the rational being is conceived as an (ideal) individual in isolation, who serves as a norm for reflective moral agents conceived as separate individuals.²³⁷ This aspect of the Kantian theory is accentuated in the (broadly) Kantian model adopted, in different versions, by Irwin and Engberg-Pedersen, which centres on the idea that ethical reflection can and should lead any rational agent to see that the fullest possible self-realization inheres in the development of altruistic concern. The model adopted by these scholars is ‘objectivist’ in that they assume that there are objectively determinable norms for psycho-ethical development. But it is ‘subjective’ (subject-centred) in the psychological language (‘self’, or ‘I’ as subject) in which this development is analysed. The model is also ‘individualist’ in focusing on the role of the individual

²³⁶ More precisely, Kantian theory (1) presents properly moral decisions as involving (autonomous) universalization of one’s case and (2) presents the idea of the person as rational being (defined by the capacity for autonomy) as a universal norm, applying to human moral thinking in general. On some salient differences between the Kantian pattern and that found in certain Greek theories, see Sherman (1989), 22–8; Annas (1993), 448–50. Arguably, in Greek ethical theory (1) moral decision-making is conceived as the application of an (objective) skill (i.e. virtue) to specific cases rather than as self-universalization, and (2) the normative wise person (*sophos*) is defined as the possessor of objective knowledge, which is developed in the ways indicated in text to n. 235 above, rather than by reference to the idea of the capacity for self-universalization. See also refs. in nn. 237–8 below.

²³⁷ See *Introd.* text to nn. 22–3; 1.1, text to nn. 26–33; 1.3, text to nn. 107–16, 160–4; 4.3, text to nn. 72–86; 4.5, text to nn. 121–37; 6.6, text to nn. 150–2. Kant does, of course, recognize the value of other-benefiting actions and motives (see 5.3 above, text to nn. 59–61); my point is that his conception of moral action and reflection does not emphasize the ‘participant’ dimension of ethical life, and does not present this as a precondition for objective knowledge in the way that (in my account) the Greek theories do: see n. 235 above.

rational agent, treated as a conceptual unit both as the performer of moral actions and as the locus of ethical reflection.²³⁸

Throughout the book, I have taken the ‘participant’ ethical approaches of MacIntyre and Williams as helpful for my purposes because (by contrast with Kant and the Kantian models just described) they give full ethical weight to the formation of ethical dispositions (and of ethico-practical rationality) through interpersonal and communal participation.²³⁹ However, as I have also stressed, they diverge from the Greek theories in failing to share the Greek view that (properly grounded) reflection can make an independent contribution to ethical life, and can, in principle, lead to objective ethical knowledge of a sort that can legitimately reshape one’s life and character.²⁴⁰ In so far as neither of the main types of modern theory considered here provides a complete parallel for the combination of a ‘participant’ ethical approach, an ‘objective’ psychological approach, and ‘objectivism’ as regards psycho-ethical norms, my attempt at advancing ‘dialogue’ between Greek and modern thought is, in this respect, incomplete.²⁴¹ However, I have also suggested that MacIntyre and Williams, in offering their accounts of the character of Greek thought, do not give sufficient weight to the role of participation, at the reflective as well as the interactive level, in setting the preconditions for defining normative concepts (such as those of being ‘human’ or ‘divine’). Conceivably, if they did so, they might qualify their accounts of their philosophical positions in relation to the Greek theories.²⁴² Whether or not this is so, it seems to me that, if there is a point of contact between Greek and modern ethical thinking (and the conceptions of the person expressed in these forms of thinking) that could usefully be explored further, it lies here, rather than in the development of approaches

²³⁸ See refs. in n. 206 above.

²³⁹ See refs. in n. 229 above, first sentence.

²⁴⁰ See 4.5 above, text to nn. 157–73.

²⁴¹ Of the modern thinkers discussed, Wiggins, arguably, comes closest to the Greek pattern of thinking: see 6.4 above, text to nn. 78–80, 85–90. I do not pretend to have offered here a comprehensive survey of possible candidates in modern philosophy for the position that I ascribe to Greek theory. As explained in the *Introd.*, text to n. 48, my project is not primarily a philosophical one, but belongs to the history of ideas. In so far as *contrast*, as well as *comparison*, with modern theories serves to render the Greek position intelligible (to us moderns), the main aim of my ‘dialogue’ is fulfilled.

²⁴² See 6.5 above, esp. text to nn. 92, 122–37.

based on Kantian or post-Kantian models of morality and personality.²⁴³

In conclusion, I make two general points on the question of the relationship between ancient and modern thinking. I have argued in this book that modern thinking contains (at least) two different strands of thinking about the person, the objective-participant and the subjective-individualist, whereas Greek thought is pervaded by one conception, the objective-participant.²⁴⁴ The claim that Greek thinking, but not modern thinking, is unified in this way might seem, on the face of it, to be implausible;²⁴⁵ at least, this feature of difference would seem to need to be explained. This book has not, of course, been shaped so as to offer a history of modern conceptions of person (let alone a historico-cultural analysis of the factors underlying this). But, in so far as my account implies any larger pattern, it is that the combined influence of thinkers such as Descartes and Kant introduced a distinctively new focus on the individual subject or agent as the locus of psychological and ethical life, a focus which ran counter to much earlier Western thought as well as the predominant patterns of thinking in Antiquity. In other words, the 'subjective-individualist' conception of personality represents at least one key strand in the thinking of (for instance) the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Existentialism.²⁴⁶ Since these movements, in the relevant aspects, have no obvious equivalent in Greek thought, it is, perhaps, unsurprising that we do not find, as I claim, an equivalent emphasis on the idea of the individual subject or agent as the key bearer of psychological or ethical significance.

What might also require some explanation is the suggestion, implied in earlier parts of this book, that recent developments in modern thinking may put us in a better position than formerly to

²⁴³ See 6.5 above, text to nn. 138–44.

²⁴⁴ For some qualifications to this general characterization of the modern position (which do not detract from the contrast that I am drawing here), see text to nn. 200–6 above.

²⁴⁵ The claim is not, of course, that Greek thought is unified in every respect but only in expressing (at least key features of) the objective-participant rather than subjective-individualist conception of person: see further 6.2 above, text to nn. 31–9.

²⁴⁶ For versions of this view of modern thought (coupled, in the case of MacIntyre (1985), chs. 10–12, and C. Taylor (1989), ch. 6, with a contrasting picture of Greek thought), see 2.5, text to nn. 100–9, esp. refs. in nn. 105–7. It would also be possible, of course, to widen the type of conceptual history outlined here to embrace economic and socio-political factors and construct a broader historico-cultural analysis of these intellectual developments.

engage in 'dialogue' with the objective-participant understanding of the person expressed in Greek thought.²⁴⁷ Williams, considering a parallel suggestion in *Shame and Necessity*, highlights the waning influence of Christianity, as well as the Kantian tradition, and the ideals of rationality and morality that these contain, as factors that may bring the modern Western conceptual situation closer to that of (at least) fifth-century Greece.²⁴⁸ That line of explanation does not wholly work in the context of my argument. As MacIntyre has brought out, medieval Christianity, in its institutional forms and ethico-theological view of humankind as a part of nature, can be seen as embodying one version of (what I am calling) an objective-participant conception of the person.²⁴⁹ Some recent thinkers have also argued (against prevalent modern assumptions to the contrary) that Christian thought is compatible with contemporary scientific understanding of the universe, and with at least some naturalistic accounts of personal identity.²⁵⁰ A version of Williams's thesis that is, perhaps, more credible, in the light of the framework of thinking applied here, is that, as Christianity has become less pervasive as an influence in modern Western thought, the kind of secularized (Protestant) Christian thinking represented especially in Kantian theory has lost some of the (implied) religious background for its ethical and metaphysical claims.²⁵¹ To put the point more broadly, that strand in modern thinking about personal identity and moral agency that presupposes (for instance) the special one-to-one relationship between individual worshipper and God in Christian (especially Protestant

²⁴⁷ See Introd., text to nn. 49; 1.2, text to nn. 38–57; 1.3, text to nn. 110–25.

²⁴⁸ Williams (1993), 166, taken with 162–6. For Williams, Plato and, to a lesser extent, Aristotle prefigure the 'ethicised' conception of reason (and human psychology generally) that Williams sees as Kantian; see 154–60, 162 (also 42–4, 98–101), taken with 6.6 above, text to nn. 161–4. Thus, it is 5th-c., pre-Platonic, Greek thought that he sees as anticipating (what he sees as) the psychological and ethical realism of the contemporary thought-world.

²⁴⁹ MacIntyre (1985), ch. 13, in which medieval Christian thought is seen as reflecting the characteristics that MacIntyre associates with an Aristotelian world-view (ch. 12).

²⁵⁰ For the first claim, see e.g. Polkinghorne (1994), with refs. to other recent discussions. Haldane (1991) argues that the idea of Jesus Christ as a fully embodied divine being could usefully inform contemporary accounts (including those of the type that I am calling 'objective') of the mind-body or person-body relationship. For a more familiar type of Christian theorizing about personal identity, see the post-Cartesian (soul-body or person-body) dualism of Swinburne (1984).

²⁵¹ See 6.6 above, text to n. 152, and refs. in n. 152.

thought) has lost much of its broader cultural basis.²⁵² In the light of this development, it is intelligible that some recent psychological and ethical thought about the person should shift away from this type of (subjective-individualist) thinking. It is intelligible too that there should be new interest in alternative (objective-participant) patterns of thinking about the person, including the versions of this found in Greek thought as well as, in some accounts, medieval or modern Christianity.²⁵³ Some of the suggestions made earlier about possible points of convergence between modern and Greek thought (for instance, on the relationship between interactive and reflective participation and objective determination of psycho-ethical norms) might be taken as extensions of this line of thought.²⁵⁴

I make one further final point relating to the larger project of correlating conceptions of person in different cultural contexts. I have already stated that the objective-participant and subjective-individualist conceptions of the person are offered here not as general categories to be applied across human cultures, but for a different, and more limited, purpose.²⁵⁵ However, I think that one implication emerges from my study, which might have some larger relevance to cross-cultural comparison. The point has been often made in recent years that, in the history of ideas, ideas (such as that of 'personality' and 'self') need to be taken as part of the whole nexus of ideas in a given culture (its 'mentality', as it is sometimes put) and not just in isolation.²⁵⁶ The contrasting table of objective-participant and subjective-individualist themes (in modern and, where relevant, Greek thought) offered in the Introduction carries certain related implications. One is that ideas, such as the themes specified in this table, need to be located in *the relevant strand* of thinking within the culture. A related point is that there can be, even within the same culture, alternative or competing strands; and that the components of each of these strands can be seen as performing analogous functions.²⁵⁷ It follows, then, that in comparing ideas

²⁵² For some parallel suggestions about the (possible) Christian roots of modern individualism, see Dumont (1985).

²⁵³ See nn. 249–50 above.

²⁵⁴ See 6.5 above, text to nn. 138–45.

²⁵⁵ See text to nn. 197–9 above.

²⁵⁶ For theories about *mentalité* (the thought-world encoded in the practices of a culture), see Introd., text to n. 11.

²⁵⁷ The suggestion is that the various themes in the table (Introd., 11–12) perform analogous roles, relating to, e.g. models of mind and agency, ethical framework, the

within a culture, and across cultures, we need to locate ideas, such as those about personality, *in the appropriate place* in the relevant strand of thought. As this book brings out, when dealing with ideas such as 'personality' or 'self', this process is likely to be controversial. But, whether or not my substantive claims about the relationship between Greek and modern thought are accepted, the book may be of interest as an attempt to apply this type of methodology.

foundation of ethics (i.e. normative ideas of personhood or human nature) in each larger framework. (For qualifications to the idea that each table constitutes a *single* conception, see text to nn. 200–6 above.)

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INDEX OF ANCIENT PASSAGES

This index contains all ancient passages quoted or discussed in the text and notes but not those cited without discussion.

AESCHYLUS

1249^b6-25 372 n. 240
 1381^a3-10 347

Suppliants

407-9 31

ARISTOTLE

De Anima (DA)

403^a29-^b3 199 n. 80
 426^b8-427^a16 405 n. 15
 428^a19-24 57 n. 92, 414-15
 434^a5-9 55 n. 88

De Motu Animalium (MA)

701^a25-8 53, 59 n. 103
 701^a32-6 50

Eudemian Ethics (EE)

1216^b35-1217^a10 273 n. 112
 1220^a4-12 248 n. 15
 1220^a10-11 248 n. 16
 1235^b30-1236^a15 350
 1236^a14-15 351
 1236^b3-6 351
 1236^b26-1237^b9 350
 1237^a30-6 351
 7. 6 354-5
 1240^b7-21 358 n. 174
 1240^a23-5 347
 1240^a23-30 347
 1240^a29-30 347 n. 114
 1240^a36-9 348 n. 117
 1240^b3-37 348 n. 117
 1240^b11-30 353, 355
 1240^b24-7 360 n. 182
 1242^b31-1243^b14 349 n. 122
 7. 12 354
 1244^b23-1245^b19 354 n. 148
 1244^b25-6 354 n. 153
 1245^a19-20, 22 354 n. 153
 1245^a22 374 n. 246
 1245^a31-5 354
 1245^a35-^b11 354 n. 152
 1245^b4 354 n. 153, 374 n. 246

Nicomachean Ethics (NE)

1095^a2-11 274 n. 113
 1095^b3-8 273 n. 112
 1095^b4-7 432
 1095^b14-22 376 n. 257
 1. 7 289-90, 328, 379, 431-5
 1097^b8-11 415 n. 47
 1097^b14-20 372 n. 240
 1097^b22-1098^a18 290 n. 180
 1097^b24-1098^a17 431
 1098^a7-18 352 n. 134, 432 n. 97
 1098^a16-17 433
 1098^a16-18 372 n. 240, 379
 1098^a20 431 n. 96
 1098^a33-^b4 273 n. 112
 1098^b2-8 432
 1102^b26-8 250 n. 30
 1102^b33-1103^a1 248
 1103^a1-3 249 n. 23
 1103^a2-3 248 n. 18
 1103^a3-10 248 n. 15
 1103^b31-^b6 272 n. 107
 1103^b26-9 436 n. 117
 1103^b26-30 375 n. 253
 1104^b11-13 272 n. 107
 1105^a28-33 376 n. 257
 1105^a32 72 n. 139
 1105^a33 72 n. 140
 1106^b21-3 71 n. 137
 1112^b15-20 54
 1112^b31-1113^a12 56 n. 89
 1113^a5-7 359 n. 177, 361 n. 188
 1115^b7-13 73 n. 144
 1115^b7-24 250 n. 30
 1115^b11-13 73
 1115^b12 249 n. 24
 1115^b12-13 72 n. 139, 352 n. 134
 1115^b17-20 72
 1115^b19 249 n. 24
 1116^a17-23 74 n. 150
 1116^a28-9 74

Nicomachean Ethics (cont.):

1117^a18-22 250 n. 30
 1119^b12-14 248 n. 18
 1119^b15-18 249
 1120^b30 248 n. 16
 4. 3 75 n. 154
 1124^b6-12 317 n. 305
 1124^b6-26 352 n. 135
 1124^b17-1125^a1 317 n. 305
 1125^b31-5 199 n. 80
 1139^a6-17 380
 1139^a11-12 73 n. 146
 1139^a21-6 72 n. 138, 74 n. 147
 1139^a22-6 249-50
 1139^b4-5 56 n. 89
 6. 5 380 n. 280, 381 n. 283
 1140^a25-8 380 n. 281
 1141^a18-^b8 380 n. 280
 1141^a18-^b12 380, 382
 1142^b12-14 380 n. 281
 1143^b11-14 273 n. 109
 1144^a1-6 380
 1144^a6-9 375 n. 257
 1144^a8-9 250
 1144^a20-^b17 250 n. 28
 1144^b30-2 250 n. 27
 1145^a6-11 380, 381 n. 283, 382
 1145^a8-9 380 n. 280
 1146^a35-1147^a10 234 n. 222
 1147^a21-2 274 n. 116
 1147^a24-^b17 234 n. 222
 1151^b34-1152^a6 250 n. 30
 1155^b28 351
 1155^b31 347, 350
 1155^b34-1156^a5 351
 1156^a10-19 350
 1156^b6-11, 19-23 347
 1156^b8-11 350
 1156^b33-5 351
 1157^a16-20 350
 1157^b1-5 350
 1157^b25-8, 31-6 347
 1157^b33-6 351
 1159^a28-33 341 n. 82, 348 n. 115
 1162^a25-33 164 n. 247
 1162^b21-1163^a9 349 n. 122
 9. 4 328-31, 343, 354-8, 358-60, 362-4, 371-2, 378, 381-2, 435
 1161^a1-2 358
 1166^a2-6 347
 1166^a2-29 358
 1166^a3-4 347
 1166^a6-9 347, 359 n. 179

1166^a7-8 394 n. 342
 1166^a10-29 329, 353
 1166^a10-^b1 348 n. 117
 1166^a13-14 359 n. 179
 1166^a13-23 381
 1166^a13-19 363 n. 202
 1166^a14-15 359 n. 177
 1166^a14-20 357 n. 165
 1166^a14-23 329, 358-9
 1166^a16-17 329
 1166^a23-9 359 nn. 177, 179
 1166^a23-33 355
 1166^a33-^b2 358 n. 174
 1166^a34 355 n. 156
 1166^b2-29 355
 1166^b6-11 359 n. 177
 1166^b7-25 363 n. 202
 1166^b7-26 359
 1166^b11-13 360 n. 182
 1168^a9-12 352 n. 136
 9. 8 328-31, 343, 351-8, 360-4, 371-2, 378, 381-2, 435
 1168^a28-^b10 355 n. 156
 1168^a29-35 347 n. 110, 354 n. 150
 1168^b1-3 347
 1168^b15-19 361
 1168^b15-23 347 n. 110, 354 n. 150
 1168^b19-21 361 n. 189
 1168^b23-8 352 n. 138, 361 n. 187
 1168^b25-6 361 n. 188
 1168^b26-1169^a6 329
 1168^b28-1169^a3 361
 1168^b28-1169^a11 353
 1168^b28-1169^a18 329, 357 n. 165
 1168^b29-1169^a2 363 n. 202, 381
 1168^b30-1169^a3 361 n. 191
 1168^b34-5 361 nn. 189, 191
 1168^b34-1169^a2 321
 1169^a2-3 329
 1169^a5 362 n. 196
 1169^a5-6, 14-15 361 n. 191
 1169^a6-11 352 n. 138
 1169^a14-15 362 n. 196
 1169^a17-18 361 n. 189
 1169^a18-36 317 n. 305
 1169^a18-^b2 362
 1169^a28-9 352
 9. 9 328-31, 354-8
 1169^b28-1170^b19 354 n. 148
 1169^b30-1170^a7 354 n. 152
 1170^b10-19 354 n. 152
 1170^b11-12 354 n. 153
 1170^b11-14 374 n. 246

1172^a5 374 n. 246
 1172^a10-15 354
 10. 7-8 290-1, 313-14, 322, 331, 342
 n. 86, 343-4, 370-83, 390-1, 404, 435-7, 440
 1177^a12-18 370 n. 238, 380
 1177^a14-15 380-1
 1177^a17-^b26 376 n. 260
 1177^a19-^b26 382
 1177^a27-^b1 383 n. 290
 1177^a33-^b1 374 n. 246
 1177^b1-4, 20 383 n. 290
 1177^b26-31 376
 1177^b26-1178^a7 331 n. 37, 415 n. 48
 1177^b30-1 321
 1177^b31-1178^a8 376 n. 260
 1177^b31-1178^a22 370 n. 238
 1177^b35-1178^a3, 5-6 381
 1178^a2-3 370 n. 238
 1178^a2-4 321
 1178^a9-22 375-6
 1178^a10-11 373
 1178^a10-22 383 n. 290
 1178^a16 381
 1178^a16-19 250 n. 27
 1178^a19-21 381
 1178^a22 381
 1178^a23-^b32 376 n. 260
 1178^b5-6 373
 1178^b7-23 370 n. 238
 1178^b9-22 373 n. 245
 1179^a20-2 375 n. 253
 1179^a22-32 370 n. 238
 1179^b4-29 375 n. 256
 1179^b4-31 274 n. 114
 1179^b31-1180^a32 273 n. 110

Magna Moralia (MM)

1213^a16-24 354 n. 152

Metaphysics (Metaph.)

980^a21-7 415 n. 48
 1032^b6-9 53, 54 n. 80

Physics

244^b6-245^a1 405 n. 15

Poetics (Po.)

1449^b38-1450^a3, 6-7 107 n. 39
 1450^a39-1451^b11 113 n. 53
 1450^b5-12 104 n. 29
 1452^b30-1453^a12 101 n. 15
 1452^b34-1453^a12 99-101

1453^a32-3 124-5 n. 96
 1453^b27-9 106 n. 36
 1454^a17-19 104 n. 36
 1454^a37-1454^b31 106 n. 36
 1459^b13-15 124-5 n. 96

Posterior Analytics (APo.)

97^b15-26 318 n. 306

Problems (Prob.)

952^a19-31 318 n. 306

Rhetoric (Rh.)

2. 2, 5, 8 104 n. 31
 1378^a30-2 198 n. 78
 1378^b30 198
 1380^b36-7 347
 2. 4 348-9
 1381^a3-10, 28-35 347
 1381^a4-5 394 n. 342
 1381^a11-13 348
 1381^b35-6 349
 1381^b35-7 347 n. 112

CICERO

De Finibus (Fin.)

1. 42-54 396
 1. 49 396 n. 356
 1. 57 395 n. 351
 1. 66 395 n. 350
 1. 66-8 394 n. 342
 1. 67 392-4
 1. 68 393, 395 n. 350
 3. 16 332, 365 n. 213
 3. 16-26 332
 3. 20 438 n. 125
 3. 20-1 332-3, 333 n. 48, 366
 3. 20-2 366
 3. 21 367
 3. 50-3 333 n. 48
 3. 50-4 332-3
 3. 52-9 366 n. 217
 3. 58-9 333 n. 48
 3. 62-3 332-3, 438 n. 125
 3. 62-8 332, 368
 3. 63-4 398 n. 363, 415 n. 47
 3. 66 318 n. 308

De Officiis (Off.)

1. 11-14 366-7
 1. 51-8 398 n. 363
 1. 66-7 318 n. 307

DIOGENES LAERTIUS (DL)

10. 120 396 n. 356
10. 138 395 nn. 351, 352

DIOGENES OF OENOANDA

- fr. 3-4 Chilton 450 n. 172

EPICTETUS

Discourses (Diss.)

1. 28 319 n. 313
1. 28. 7-8 230, 233
2. 18. 24 57 n. 93

EPICURUS

Key Doctrines

- 5 395 n. 351
25 396

Letter to Menoeceus

- 124-5 394 n. 343

EURIPIDES

Hippolytus (Hipp.)

- 373-90 226-7

Medea (Med.)

- 1 164 n. 249, 172 n. 281
9 164 n. 249
14-16 165 n. 250
16 164 n. 249
21-3 161 n. 235
111-14 166
113-14 167
257 163 n. 245
374-5 155
446-64 157 n. 220, 160
459-64 157 n. 221
461 157 n. 221
465-519 157-62
467-72 158 n. 223
476 158 n. 226, 160 n. 233
481 158 n. 225
482 160 n. 233
483-5 160 n. 233
483-508 165 n. 253
486 167 n. 260
488-91 167 n. 260
489-91 160 n. 234

- 502-15 158 n. 226
504-5 165 n. 253
507-8 165 n. 253
508 160 n. 233
509-11 160 n. 233
513-15 160 n. 234
514-15 160 n. 233
515 157-8 n. 222, 158 n. 226
521-75 174
522-75 162-4
534-44 162
549-50 163
549-67 163 n. 245
555 162 n. 242
559-65 163 n. 246
562-7 164
565-7 166 n. 257
567 163 n. 246
568 162 n. 242
568-74 164 n. 248
585-7 163 n. 245
610-15 157 n. 221
616-18 157-8 n. 222
791-6 155
803-5 168-9
810 155 n. 211
817 169
818 155 n. 211
818-19 155
877-8 168-9
887-8 169 n. 265
898 161 n. 235
914-21 169 n. 268
1021-2 219 n. 158
1021-41 218
1021-80 120, 123, 214, 216-26, 223
n. 176
1024-5 219 n. 158
1024-7 166, 348 n. 115
1024-35 169
1024-36 172
1029 219 n. 158
1029-35 166, 348 n. 115
1036-8 219 n. 158
1040-1 219
1042-8 218
1042-55 219-22
1044 220
1048 220
1049-50 221
1049-55 217
1051-2 221
1053-4 221

- 1054 220 n. 163
1056-8 120 n. 80, 222
1056-64 221-2
1056-80 221 n. 169
1058 221
1059 222 n. 171
1059-64 221-2
1063 167 n. 259
1065-80 223-5
1067-8 223 n. 177
1077-80 120 n. 80
1078-80 177-8, 181, 196 n. 69,
216-17, 217 n. 151, 223-32
1079 224 n. 183, 232 n. 215
1209-10, 1213-14 167
1241 167 n. 259
1329 170 n. 275
1330-50 171 n. 276
1342-3, 1346-50 171 n. 277
1351-60 171
1360-2 172, 219 n. 162
1361-77 171
1364-6, 1372, 1389-404 171
1396, 1399-1402, 1413-14 172

GALEN

De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis (PHP)

3. 3. 14-16, 188-9 De Lacy 228
3. 3. 17, 188-9 De Lacy 228
4. 2. 1-18, 238-43 De Lacy 229 n. 201
4. 2. 10-18, 240-3 De Lacy 229 n. 200
4. 2. 24-7, 242-5 De Lacy 229 n. 202
4. 2. 27, 244-5 De Lacy 230
4. 6. 27, 274-5 De Lacy 230
4. 6. 43-6, 278-81 De Lacy 230 n. 207
4. 7. 12-19, 284-5 De Lacy 229 n. 203
5. 5. 14, 320-1 De Lacy 450 n. 172

HOMER

Iliad (Il.)

1. 286 198 n. 75
1. 422 192 n. 60
2. 365-6 70 n. 132
6. 441-6 84 n. 188, 88 n. 205
6. 444-5 57 n. 95
9. 115-16 146
9. 115-20 192 n. 57
9. 160-1 144 n. 169
9. 255-8 192
9. 260-1 192
9. 261 157 n. 221
9. 308-429 123-4, 135-52, 304 n. 241,
416
9. 312-13 137-8
9. 315 137 n. 137, 141
9. 316-20 138
9. 318-20 149
9. 323-33 140
9. 325 158 n. 225
9. 336-43 140
9. 337-8 129, 140
9. 344-5 140-1
9. 345 137 n. 137
9. 353, 356, 359 142 n. 156
9. 357-60 141 n. 154, 142-3, 359-61
9. 367-8 145
9. 367-73 142
9. 369-72 207 n. 111
9. 371-2 158 n. 223
9. 372-3 146
9. 378-85 144-5
9. 378-87 143
9. 379-85 150 n. 192
9. 386 144
9. 386-7 145, 146-7 n. 181, 200, 202
n. 91, 206
9. 387 129, 314 n. 291
9. 392 144 n. 171
9. 397-8 144 n. 171
9. 401-7 150 n. 192
9. 401-9 147, 149-50, 342 n. 86
9. 406-7 145 n. 172
9. 406-8 311 n. 276
9. 410-16 149-50, 377 n. 265
9. 417-26 147
9. 421-2 148
9. 427-9 148
9. 428-9 142-3
9. 496-7 192
9. 515-17 192 n. 59
9. 533-4 197
9. 553-5 193
9. 595 193
9. 598 193
9. 598-605 193
9. 618-19 142-3
9. 628-30 194-5
9. 628-32 152 n. 201
9. 628-42 194
9. 632-6 144 n. 165
9. 632-8 151
9. 636-8 195
9. 639-42 152 n. 201, 195
9. 645 199 n. 80

Iliad (cont.):

9. 645-6 197
 9. 645-8 120, 178, 190, 195-8, 200-1, 203, 214
 9. 646 199, 225
 9. 646-8 181
 9. 648 158 n. 226, 198-9
 9. 650-5 142-3
 9. 699-703 151 n. 199
 11. 404 54 n. 83
 11. 404-5 80 n. 175
 11. 404-10 32, 45, 48, 54 n. 83, 61, 63, 69-70, 73-7, 87-8, 416
 11. 405-6 76
 11. 408 57 n. 95
 11. 408-10 69-70
 11. 409 74 n. 149
 11. 409-10 53, 133, 148
 11. 411-60 51 n. 69
 11. 415-16 73 n. 146
 12. 310-28 131-3, 134-5, 148-9, 304 n. 241, 416
 12. 312 132
 12. 315-21 132
 12. 322-8 134, 311 n. 276
 12. 324-5 139
 12. 325-8 132
 16. 22 201 n. 87
 16. 23-7 201
 16. 30 200 n. 86
 16. 38-43 201
 16. 52-5 200-1
 16. 53-4 201 n. 88
 16. 59 158 n. 226
 16. 60-3 200-1
 16. 72-3, 83-6 202 n. 91
 17. 90-105 48, 54 n. 83, 78-80
 17. 98-9 53
 17. 107-15 51 n. 69
 17. 238-45 79
 18. 79-126 150 n. 193
 18. 90-4 32
 18. 95-6 317 n. 303
 18. 95-104 316 n. 301
 18. 98-104 317 n. 303
 18. 107-10 202 n. 92
 18. 107-13 202-3
 18. 111 202
 18. 112 203
 18. 246-313 115
 19. 85-138 146
 19. 86-90 146 n. 179
 19. 137-8 146 n. 179

19. 270-5 146
 21. 552-70 48, 54 n. 83, 80-1
 21. 555 81 n. 178
 22. 56-8 82
 22. 98-130 49, 54 n. 83, 81-92, 95-6, 115, 119
 22. 99-110 84, 86 n. 197, 90 n. 212
 22. 100 74
 22. 100-7 96
 22. 101-3 85, 91 n. 217
 22. 103 86, 89 n. 208, 92 n. 120
 22. 104-5 88
 22. 104-7 83-5
 22. 108 89 n. 208
 22. 108-10 83, 86-7
 22. 110-20 91 n. 219
 22. 111-21 87
 22. 111-28 90 n. 212
 22. 126-30 87
 22. 129 89 n. 208
 22. 123-8 91 n. 218
 22. 131-8 88 n. 204
 22. 131-66 51 n. 69
 24. 477-506 146

Odyssey

20. 5 54, 184-5
 20. 10-12 184 n. 28
 20. 13-16 184, 188 n. 47, 189
 20. 17 184 n. 29
 20. 17-24 188-9
 20. 18-21 184-5, 184 n. 27, 187, 188 n. 47, 203-4, 225, 228
 20. 22-4 184 n. 29
 20. 24-7 184
 20. 28-30 184 n. 28
 22. 417-72 189

LONG AND SEDLEY, *Hellenistic Philosophers* (LS)

- 20B, C 450 n. 170
 21B 331, 393 n. 341, 395 n. 351
 21E(2) 331, 391, 396
 21Q, P 395 n. 352
 22A, B 397 n. 358
 22C(2) 394
 22E 391
 22F 330, 391, 393, 394
 22H 331
 22I 391
 22K, L(6)-(7), M, R 397 n. 358
 22O(3) 391-2, 392 n. 334, 393-4

Laws (Lg.)

- 653a-c 272 n. 107
 811c-e 320 n. 316

Phaedo (Phd.)

- 64c-67b 404 n. 9
 68c-69c, 83e-84a 291
 80a-83b 404 n. 9
 94d-e 103 n. 24, 228 n. 198
 94d6-e1 184 n. 27
 115a5-6 320 n. 316

Phaedrus (Phdr.)

- 244a-257b 386
 249a2, c4-6 387
 252c-253a 387
 252c-256e 263 n. 77
 253-6 228 n. 198
 253d-254e 387
 254b-c 388
 255a-256e 387
 256a-e 388

Protagoras (Prt.)

- 352b-357e 227 n. 193, 233

Republic (R)

- 331e3-4 302 n. 233
 343b-344c 412 n. 39
 357b-367e 276
 357b-368c 267 n. 90
 368a-b 452
 371e-372a 303 n. 238
 379a-383b 293 n. 199
 379d 320 n. 314
 379d-380c 293 n. 199
 382a-b 294
 386a-388c 293 n. 198
 387d6, 8 295 n. 205
 388a-c 319 n. 311
 390d 103 n. 24, 228 n. 198
 390d4-5 184 n. 27
 390e, 391c 315 n. 295, 319
 391b 319 n. 311
 392a-b 320 n. 314
 392a13-b1 294
 396c5-d3 101 n. 16
 400c-402c 269 n. 94, 271 n. 104
 401-2 305
 401a-402c 281 n. 146, 292, 306 n. 256
 401d-402c 274 n. 115
 401d6-7 269 n. 94
 401e-402a 271-2 n. 105

- 22Q(5)-(6) 330
 22S 397
 23A(4), B, C(3), D, E(5), F(3), J, K 439
 24C 393
 24D 394 nn. 342, 344
 24E 394 n. 343
 26A, F(2), G 439 n. 129
 33C, I 56
 53A(4) 51 n. 68, 56
 54H, N 367 n. 224, 415 n. 48
 57C 365 n. 215
 57D(1), E 368
 57F 333 n. 46, 368 n. 226, 397 n. 360, 398 n. 363, 415 n. 47
 57G 368 n. 229, 397 n. 360
 59D 290 n. 181, 333 n. 46, 366 n. 217
 59E(2), G, Q 367 n. 222
 61L 450 n. 171
 63A-E 290 n. 183
 63E(5)-(6) 367 n. 224, 415 n. 48
 64F 366 n. 217
 65J 229 n. 200
 67A(1), B-G 398

LUCRETIVUS

De Rerum Natura

1. 62-79, 80-101 397 n. 357
 3. 830 394 n. 343
 5. 13-54 397 n. 357
 5. 1194-1203 397 n. 357, 439
 6. 68-79 439

PLATO

Apology (Ap.)

- 21a-23b 283 n. 152
 28b-30b 316 n. 301, 320 n. 316
 29c-30b 317 n. 302
 29d-31a 283 n. 152

Crito

- 44e-53d 317 n. 302

Gorgias (Grg.)

- 482e-484c 412 n. 39
 484c-488a 342 n. 86, 377 n. 265
 491e-492c 412 n. 39
 521d-522c 283 n. 152

Hippias Minor

- 370-1 319 n. 312

Republic (cont.):

401e4-402a4 271, 292
 402b5, c2, c6 271 n. 103
 403a7-8, c6-7 271-2 n. 105
 412c-e 301 n. 226
 412c-414a, 413c3-4 274 n. 116
 413c-414b 301 n. 266
 427d-434c 268-9
 428c-d 281 n. 144
 429c 268 n. 92
 429c6-8 270 n. 98, 293
 429e7-430a3 270
 429e7-430c5 270 n. 98
 430a-b 270 n. 101
 430c 294
 430c2-3, 4-5 293 n. 196
 431c5-6 269 n. 96
 433a-c 302 n. 234
 433b-435b 355 n. 159
 436a9-b1 251 n. 36
 436b-439d 251
 439a-d 252 n. 37
 439d5-6 260 n. 69
 439d5-441c1 251 n. 36
 439e-440a 234, 253
 439e-440b 252 n. 37
 440d1-2 188 n. 47
 441b 103 n. 24, 188 n. 47, 228, 235
 n. 230
 441b3-c2 253 n. 40
 441b4-c2 184 n. 27
 441c-444e 268
 441d-444b 355 n. 159
 441d-444e 260
 441e4-5 260 n. 69, 297 n. 212
 441e4-6 269 n. 93
 441e8-442a5 268, 269 n. 97
 442a4-b3 251 n. 36
 442a6-b3 245
 442b11-c8 269 n. 93
 442c5-8 297 n. 212
 442c10-d1 246, 249, 251 n. 36
 443c-444b 302 n. 234
 473d-e 302 n. 235
 484-5 299, 300 n. 225
 484b-d 281 n. 144
 485-6 305, 306 n. 253
 485a-487a 295 n. 204
 485d-e 295-6
 486a-b 296
 486a5-6 300
 486a5-b3 295
 486a8-b4 293 n. 196

490c-502c, 492b-c, 498a-c 275 n. 118
 498d8-499a2 281 n. 145
 498e 292 n. 191
 499b 302 n. 235
 499b5 301 n. 227
 500-1 300, 305
 500b-501b 292 n. 190, 300, 302 n. 235
 500b-501c 306 nn. 254, 256
 500c-501b 281 n. 144
 500d1 300 n. 223
 500d4 301 n. 227
 500d4-8, 501b1-5 292 n. 190
 500d7-8 293 n. 196
 501c1-2 300 n. 223
 503a-b 301 n. 226
 503a-e 274 n. 117
 505a-b 281 n. 151, 284 n. 156, 294
 n. 202
 505a-509e 263 n. 76
 506c-e 282 n. 151
 508e3 271 n. 103
 514a-517a 271 n. 103
 517c-e 294 n. 202
 519-21 306 nn. 253, 255, 307-15, 376,
 440
 519b-d 301 n. 226
 519c-520c 281 n. 144
 519c4-5 305 n. 249
 519c4-6 276
 519c8-d7, e4 301 n. 227
 519d-520a 303-4 n. 240
 519d8-520a6 302 n. 232
 520a-d 302
 520a8-9 301 n. 227
 520b3-4 301 n. 229
 520b4 303-4 n. 240
 520b4-c1 303
 520b5-c6 301 n. 228, 302 n. 235
 520c 271 n. 103, 294 n. 202, 310 n. 226
 520c1 301 n. 227
 520d6-8 301 n. 229
 520d6-e1 302
 520d7 303-4 n. 240
 521b7-10 301 n. 227
 522-34 438 n. 124
 532d-533a 282 n. 151
 534b-c 263 n. 76, 282
 537e-539d 274 n. 117
 549c-550b 256
 550a-b 255 n. 50
 550a4-b6 256, 274 n. 117
 553c-d 255 n. 50
 553c5, d1-5 254

553d1-7 417 n. 54
 554c12-d2 246, 297 n. 213
 554c12-d3 255 n. 50
 554d9-10, e4 246
 558a-562a 254 n. 46
 560c2-d6 253 n. 42
 561d6-7 258 n. 63
 571a-575b 254 n. 46
 571b-d 259 n. 66
 572b 259 n. 66
 572e 258 n. 61
 573b1-3 258 n. 61
 573b1-4 253 n. 43
 573b4 253 n. 44
 574d5-e2 253 n. 43
 574e 253
 580d-e 252
 580d-581e 254 n. 47
 580d-587b 296
 581b, 582b-d 296 n. 209
 583-7 299, 306 n. 253
 585c1-2, 585d-586b 296 n. 209
 586a-b 259 n. 66
 586d-587a 260 n. 67
 586e 297 n. 213
 586e4-587a1 297
 588b-592b 451-5
 588d-589b, 588e3-589a6 452
 589a-b 245 n. 7, 259
 589c-590c 453
 589c6-d3, d1-2, e4-5, 590a3-4 452
 590c8-d6 453 n. 188
 590d1-4 452
 591a10-b7 453 n. 188
 591b 245 n. 7, 259
 591c-592b 454, 455 n. 194
 592b2-3 454
 592c10-b6 454 n. 192
 603c-605e 316 n. 297
 605c10 103
 605c10-d5, e4-6 99, 100, 316 n. 298
 605c10-606b8 119 n. 79
 618c-619a, 620a-d 455 n. 194

Symposium (Smp.)

179b-e 341 n. 82
 206b-207a 385 n. 300
 206c-e, 206e7-207a4 327 n. 20
 208e-209e 327 n. 21
 209b-c 385 n. 300
 209c 386
 209e-210a 439 n. 129
 210a-212a 263 n. 77, 291 n. 187

210a-212b 322, 327, 384-90
 210a3-4 389 n. 320
 210a4-8 388
 210a6-7 387, 389 n. 320
 210a7-8 385 n. 299
 210b6-c3 385 n. 301
 210b8-c3 388
 210c1-2 327 n. 21
 210c1-3 385 n. 299
 210c3, 7 387
 210d4-6 385 n. 299
 210d6 390 n. 328
 210e1-6 389 n. 320
 210e3 387
 211b5-6 385 n. 301
 211b7-d1 384
 211c-212a 389
 211c1 387
 211d 291 n. 187
 211d-212a 386
 211d1-8 389 n. 320
 212a 291 n. 187
 212a-b 439 n. 129
 212a3-6 387 n. 309
 212a3-7 327 n. 21
 212a5-6 386
 212b2-7 389
 215e-216b 391 n. 329
 219e-221c 320 n. 316

Theaetetus

151e-157b 411 n. 35

SENECA

De Tranquillitate Animi

5. 2-4 320 n. 316

Epistulae (Ep.)

92. 11-13 366 n. 217

Medea

926-32 198 n. 76

Phaedra

177-85 198 n. 76

SOPHOCLES

Ajax (Ai.)

430-80 205-8
 430-524 205
 442-9 207

Ajax (cont.):
 448-9 207 n. 111
 454 206 n. 107, 208 n. 117
 457-80 206, 210
 458-9 206 n. 107
 465, 469-72 207
 473 208 n. 117
 473-80 208, 377 n. 265
 485-524 205
 490-5 208 n. 119
 494-505 208 n. 117
 506-7 208 n. 118
 510-15 211
 522 208 n. 119
 545-82, 548-9, 551, 557 209

558-9 209 n. 123
 562, 570, 572-7 209
 610-11, 614-16, 625-6, 639-40 215
 n. 144
 640 208 n. 120
 646-92 204-5, 209-14
 650-3, 666-8 211
 677 212
 678-82 212-13
 1266-87 207 n. 111

THUCYDIDES

2. 37. 2-3, 40. 2 410-11

GENERAL INDEX

The abbreviations for ancient authors and works are the same as those used in the Index of Ancient Passages. Modern scholars are included only when their works are discussed in the text or are especially relevant to the argument of the book; all secondary works cited in the book are listed in the Bibliography.

Achilles (in Homer):

analysis of great speech (*Il.* 9.
 308-429) 136-48
 and choice of lives 147-50
 generalizations in great speech
 131-2, 136-8, 149-51
 and heroism 118-20, 148-54
 language of great speech 128-31,
 136-7
 as member of ethical community 125,
 135, 141-3, 147-8
 modern critical responses to 32,
 114-15, 126-31
 and reciprocity 135, 137, 139-41,
 143-51
 and second-order reasoning 131, 136,
 148-52
 and psycho-ethical conflict (*Il.* 9)
 195-200, (*Il.* 16) 200-2, (*Il.* 18)
 202-3
 Plato's responses to 103 n. 26,
 315-20
 actions (seen as belief-based) 43, 45-6,
 85, 92-3, 104, 142-3
 action-theory 43-5, 46 n. 55
 and social context 176
 Adkins, A. W. H. 3, 32-4, 37, 44, 45
 n. 53, 49, 60, 66 n. 121, 82-3, 90,
 261 n. 73
 Agamemnon (in Homer):
 Achilles' attitude to (*Il.* 9) 135,
 138-52, 195-200, (*Il.* 16) 200-2,
 (*Il.* 18) 202-3
 'apology' (*Il.* 9) 144, 146, (*Il.* 19)
 202-3 n. 94
 and E. *Med.* 157-8
agathos ('good'):
 (Homer) 70 n. 132
 (Plato) Form of, 278, 284 n. 156,
 304-5, 306 n. 253
 Agenor (in Homer) 48, 80-1

agent regret 90-2

Ajax (in Hom. *Il.* 9) 143-4, 151-2,
 193-5
 Ajax (in S. *Al.*):
 'deception-speech' (646-92) 204-6,
 209-14
 deliberative monologue (430-80)
 206-8
 failure in reciprocity basis for
 attempted vengeance 205-7
 suicide as exemplary gesture 208,
 213-14
akrasia ('weakness of will'):
 (in Aristotle) 33-4, 44-5, 179, 182,
 234, 360
 (in Davidson) 44-5, 178 n. 10, 235
 n. 231
 (in Greek philosophy in general) 236
 (in Homer) 196
 (in Plato) 234-5, 253
 (in Stoicism) 229-32
 see also psycho-ethical conflict
 altruism 302-3, 323-4, 326-41, 347,
 349-52, 372-3, 384, 392
 and self-realization 326-33, 338-40,
 353-5, 356-7, 365, 464
 anger:
 (in Aristotle) 198-9
 (in Euripides) 157, 160, 162, 170,
 223-5
 (in Homer) 184, 187, 189-90,
 192-204
 (in Sophocles) 207-8
 Annas, J. 19 n. 51, 61 n. 106, 251
 nn. 33, 35, 255 n. 52, 277 n. 128,
 296 n. 207, 318 n. 306, 323 n. 8, 330
 n. 34, 331 n. 40, 332 n. 45, 340
 n. 76, 342 n. 85, 352 n. 137, 353
 n. 143, 368 n. 228, 379 n. 277, 392
 n. 335, 393 n. 339, 395-6, 438
 n. 122, 439 n. 126, 455 n. 194

- Anscombe, E. 44
 Antiphon 410-11
 'Archimedean' role 8, 27, 326, 356,
 358-60, 362, 364-5, 371, 382, 424,
 428-9, 435, 447-8, 452 n. 184, 453
aristeuein ('be best' in Homer) 54 n. 83,
 73-4, 74 n. 149, 87-8
 Aristotle:
akrasia 33-4, 44-5, 179, 182, 234, 360
 anger 198-9
 ethical virtue 71-3, 247-50, 272-5,
 289-90, 346-55
 ethico-emotional responses to tragic
 figures 99-108
 friendship 322, 328-31, 346-63
 happiness, conceived as 'dominant' or
 'inclusive'? 373, 379 n. 278
 human and divine happiness
 (practical and theoretical wisdom)
 (in *NE* 10. 7-8) 331, 342-3, 370-83
 human nature and virtue (in *NE* 1. 7)
 8, 289-90, 328, 431-5
 human psychology 6, 43-5, 52-6
 loving another 'for his own sake'
 329-30, 347, 349-50, 435-7
 methodology of normative concepts
 8, 430-7
 'the that' and 'the why' in ethical
 development 273-5, 281, 290
 n. 180, 360
 'what each of us is' 321-2, 329-31,
 343, 346, 353-63, 370-83, 435
 assent (Stoic) 56-7, 227-9, 231-3
Atreidai (S. Ai.) 205-6, 211-13
 autonomy 7, 11, 27-9, 61, 69, 71, 77,
 110, 127-8, 264-5, 277, 419-20,
 445-6
 Baier, A. 176 n. 5
 Belfiore, E. 75 n. 154, 106 n. 38
 Blundell, M. W. 153, 210, 211 n. 130,
 213 n. 138, 214 n. 141, 368 n. 229
 Böhme, J. 186 n. 34
 bonding of lives (*E. Med.*) 159-60,
 164-8, 218-19
bouleumata ('plans') (*E. Med.*) 169,
 220-1, 223-5
 Bowra, C. M. 114 n. 57
 Bradley, A. C. 98, 109, 111-13, 120,
 122-3
 bridgeheads, concepts used as, 18 n. 49,
 403, 456, 459
 Broadie, S. 375-6
 Burnyeat, M. F. 10 n. 29, 35 n. 17,
 273-4, 357 n. 167, 409-11
 Butcher, S. H. 98, 107-9
 Cairns, D. L. 66 n. 123, 67 n. 125, 75
 nn. 151-2, 80 n. 174, 84 n. 188,
 253-4 n. 44
 Carrithers, M., Collins, S., and Lukes,
 S. 3 nn. 7, 10, 456 n. 197
 Cartesian model of mind 6, 34-7, 42-4,
 58-9, 405, 409-58
 categorical imperative 38, 77, 336
 character 72-6, 78, 100-1, 105-6,
 110-11, 247-50, 248 n. 17, 272-4,
 328, 361-2, 444, 461 n. 221
 characterization in (Greek epic and)
 tragedy:
 late Romantic views of 107-13
 objective-participant view of 4, 96-7,
 115-24
 Platonic and Aristotelian views of
 99-107
 structuralist view of 113-15
 character-personality distinction 21-2,
 116-18
charis ('favour', 'gratitude') 138-9, 206,
 207 n. 111, 208 n. 119
 Charles, D. 45, 57 n. 94
 children, significance of:
 in Aristotle's theory of friendship
 347-9
 in *E. Med.* 160, 163-4, 166-9, 172,
 218-22
 in Stoic ethical theory 368
 choice of lives 147-50, 150 n. 194,
 207-8, 256-9, 311 n. 276, 342-3,
 417, 455
cholos ('anger', 'bile') 192-3, 195-200,
 202-3
 Christianity 117 n. 70, 335-8, 445,
 467-8
 Chrysippus 227-36, 450 n. 172
 Claus, D. B. 133-4, 139, 142, 145, 188
 n. 47
 Cleanthes 450 n. 171
 Collins, S. 5 n. 17, 9 n. 27, 40 n. 35
 consciousness 42-3, 57-9, 255, 257
see also self-consciousness
 content (in psychological theory) 42
 n. 38, 43 n. 42
 Cooper, J. 350

- courage (*andreia*):
 in Aristotle 72-4, 250
 in Epicureanism 396
 in Homer 73-8, 80-2
 in Plato 268 n. 92, 269-70, 271
 n. 102, 293-5, 300
 cultural anthropology 3, 5 n. 17, 30
 Davidson, D. 43, 45, 52 n. 72, 442-3
 Dean, James 128-9
 decision-making, *see* deliberation
 deliberation:
 in Aeschylus 31
 in Aristotle 44-5, 50, 380 n. 281
 in Euripides 216-26
 in Homer 46-50, 54-6, 58-60, 184
 in Sophocles 206-8
 in Stoicism 56-7
 Dennett, D. 43 n. 42, 52 nn. 72-3, 58
 n. 100, 59 n. 102, 84-5, 186-7, 255,
 419 n. 62, 442, 458
 Descartes, *see* Cartesian model of mind
 developmental approaches to Greek
 ethics and psychology 3, 5, 16,
 20-2, 29-30, 32-3, 35-6, 40-1,
 65-7, 185-6, 196, 216-17, 224-5
 dialectic:
 as embodied in literary work 107,
 121-2, 132, 153-4, 214
 as mode of ethical reflection 15-16,
 281-3
 strong (in Aristotle) 357, 369-70
 n. 236
 dialogue:
 as expression of objective-participant
 conception of personality 122-4
 importance of in Greek culture 14, 16
 three types of, *see* self in dialogue
dianoia ('thought') (in *Arist. Po.*) 103,
 107 n. 39
 Dihle, A. 178 n. 10, 224 n. 182, 445-6
 n. 152
 Diller, H. 224 n. 183
 Diomedes (in Homer) 151 n. 199
 Diotima, mysteries of, *see* Plato (other
 dialogues)
 'divine' life, goal of human aspiration:
 in Aristotle 370, 372, 380, 383
 in Plato 298, 300, 385-6, 390, 422,
 452
 Dodds, E. R. 66 nn. 121, 123, 188
 Donlan, W. 133-4, 139-40
 Durkheim, E. 40 n. 35
 Easterling, P. E. 121 n. 85
 egoism-altruism contrast 324, 334, 340,
 347, 353, 392-3
 Emilsson, E. K. 405 n. 15
 emotions:
 and ethical responses to literary
 figures 96-9, 99-113, 115-19, 152,
 172-3
 ethical significance of (in Aristotle)
 71-3, 78, 248-50; (in Homer) 73-4,
 183-204; (in Plato) 227, 234,
 235-6, 251-4; (in Williams) 64
 seen as belief-based 178-9, 191-3,
 195-204, 227-36, 251-4, 269-70,
 294-5, 461
see also *pathos*
 Engberg-Pedersen, T. 9 n. 28, 19, 323,
 332-3, 338-40, 356, 364-70, 406-8,
 447, 464
 Epictetus 230, 233, 291 n. 185, 319
 n. 313, 450-1 n. 173
 Epicureanism:
 on friendship 331-2, 391-5
 on god 439
 on nature in ethics 439
 on pleasure and virtue 291, 395-7
epithumetikon ('appetitive', 'sensual')
 part of psyche in *Pl. R.* 245-6,
 251, 253-4, 256, 259-60, 268-9,
 295-6
epithumia ('appetite', 'sensual desire')
 234, 251, 295-6
 ethical development:
 analysed in objective-participant
 terms 345-6, 455
 conceived in terms of discourse 444,
 449-50, 453-4
 two patterns of in Greek thought 23,
 288-9, 343-5, 438, 463
see also virtue, pre- and post-reflective
 ethical-moral distinction 7, 176
 ethical motivation, conceptions of:
 in Aristotle 71-3
 in Homer 69-71, 73-80, 82-92
 in MacIntyre 62-3
 in Williams 63-4, 66-7
see also virtue
ethike arete ('virtue of character') in
 Aristotle 71-3, 247-50, 272-4
ethos ('character') in Aristotle 72-3,
 248-50, 248 n. 17, 272-4
ethos-pathos ('character-emotion')
 distinction 101 n. 18, 103-4

- eudaimonia* ('happiness'):
 in Aristotle 372, 379-82
 in Epicureanism 393 n. 339
 in *E. Med.* 164, 166 n. 257
 in Greek philosophy in general 342
 Euripides' *Hippolytus* 154 n. 208, 226
 Euripides' *Medea*:
 ancient readings of monologue 226-32
 bonding of lives 159-60, 164-8, 171-2
 comment in Arist. *Po.* 106 n. 36
 infanticide as exemplary gesture 119-20, 158-62, 168 n. 263
 Medea as non-standard woman 161-2
 Medea's great monologue (1021-80) 216-26
 parallels with Hom. (*Il.* 9) 156-8, 160
 psycho-ethical conflict in monologue 120, 217-18, 220, 225-6
 reason for revised vengeance-plan 154-6, 160, 168-9
 reciprocity in 158, 160, 165-7, 169-70, 172
 significance of central *agon* 156-64;
 of final *agon* 170-2
 Snell's reading of monologue 177-8, 216-17, 223-5
 textual problems in monologue 221-2
 translation (of lines 1078-80) 223-5, 232 n. 215
 Everson, S. 405 n. 15, 409-10
 exemplary gesture 154, 158-62, 168 n. 263, 173, 182, 199-205, 208, 210, 213-14, 217-18, 220, 226, 233, 308, 311-14
 Fenik, B. 75 n. 153, 79 nn. 170-1
 Ferber, R. 282-3 n. 151
 Ferrari, G. R. F. 255 nn. 49, 51, 271 n. 103, 293 n. 199, 387 n. 312
 Fichte, J. 126
 first-order reasoning 95, 133, 415-16
 first-personal viewpoint 6, 14-15, 34-5, 127, 405, 407, 410
 Finley, M. I. 70
 Flory, S. 161 n. 235
 Foley, H. 161 nn. 235, 237, 224
 formalism, Russian 113 n. 54
 Fortenbaugh, W. W. 198 n. 79, 249 n. 21
 Foucault, M. 338 n. 68
 Frankfurt, H. 186, 413-15, 418-22, 445
 Frede, D. 452 n. 181
 freedom of the will 57, 90, 247 n. 10, 265, 277, 413-14, 420, 444-55
 defined in objective-participant terms 444, 449-50, 453-4
 Freud, S. 42, 187-8, 254-5
 friendship, see *philia/philoi*
 functionalism 42-3
 funeral lament 166-7
 Gadamer, H.-G. 282 n. 148
 Galen 227-8, 231-3, 235
 Gaskin, R. 45-6, 49
 Geist ('spirit', 'consciousness') in Hegel 36, 111
geras ('prize of honour') 139-40, 145, 148, 201 n. 88
 Gewirth, A. 339
 Gill, C. 4 n. 14, 51 n. 71, 52 n. 74, 96-7, 116-18, 154 n. 208, 191 n. 54, 232 nn. 213, 217, 258 n. 62, 259 n. 66, 269 n. 96, 282 nn. 148, 150, 282-3 n. 151, 286 nn. 168-9, 287 nn. 172-3, 300 n. 224, 384 n. 294, 398 n. 364, 403-4, 414 nn. 44-5, 415 n. 46, 425 nn. 77, 78, 431 n. 96, 432-5, 438 n. 125, 442, 452 n. 181
 Glaucon 452-4
 god(s):
 in Epicureanism 439
 in Homer 79, 185 n. 31, 202-3 n. 94
 Plato's view of Greek poetic gods 100 n. 13, 320
 Goldhill, S. 121-2 n. 86, 191 n. 54
 good, see *agathos*
 Gosling, J. 178 n. 10, 233 n. 219, 235 nn. 229, 231
 Gould, J. 112 n. 51, 120 n. 83, 121 n. 85, 122-3 n. 89, 155 n. 212
 gratuitous gesture in Homeric ethics 77 n. 159, 134-6, 142, 144 n. 171, 148, 194, 352
 Green, T. H. 340, 446-7
 Gribble, D. 411-12 n. 37
 Griffin, J. 196-8
 Griffin M. T. 367 n. 220
 Hainsworth, B. 134 n. 131
 Haldane, J. 467 n. 250
 Halliwell, S. 293 n. 199, 320 n. 316
hamartia ('mistake') in Arist. *Po.* 99, 101 nn. 15-16, 114-15

- happiness, see *eudaimonia*
 harmony in the psyche, see Plato, *Republic*
 Havelock, E. A. 16 n. 45, 98 n. 9, 270 n. 100
 heart (as psychological part/function in Homer) 184, 187-90, 192-3, 195-201
 Hector (in Homer) 49, 76, 81-93, 95-7, 114-15, 119
 Hegel, G. W. F. 35-6, 40, 109, 111, 113
 Heracles (in Euripides) 91
 hero:
 an ambiguous term 98-9
 'heroic temper' 153
 James Dean as 128-9
 late Romantic accounts of 107-13, 118
 objective-participant account of 115-24, 172-3
 as outsider 124-9, 141, 147, 153
 Plato and Aristotle on 99-107
 problematic 95-8
 structuralist account of 113-15
 subjective-individualist account of 124-9, 173
 see also Achilles; Euripides' *Medea*;
 exemplary gesture; second-order reasoning
 heroic code:
 in *E. Med.* 154 n. 209, 155 n. 211
 in Homer 70-1, 131
hexis/hexeis (disposition(s)) 72-3, 249-50, 272
 Hierocles 365 n. 215, 368 n. 229
 Hill, T. E. 9 n. 27
 Homer:
 Achilles' great speech (*Il.* 9. 308-429) 131-54
 Achilles in *Il.* 9 (other) 190-204
 deliberative monologues (*Il.*) 29-93; (*Od.*) 183-90
 ethical language 54 n. 83, 69-70, 73-4, 76, 78-9, 83, 86, 88-9, 132-5, 138-48
 formulaic and non-formulaic language 129-30, 136-7, 144-5
 psycho-ethical conflict 183-90, 195-204
 psychological and ethical language, links between 120, 189-90, 204
 psychological language 183-200
 see also Achilles; Odysseus,
 honour (*time*):
 in *E. Med.* 154
 in Homer 74-8, 88, 114, 132, 134-5, 138
 in S. *Ai.* 206-8
hormē (Stoic 'impulse to action') 50, 56, 229
hubris ('insulting violence', 'insolence') 142, 145, 198
 human (or 'divine') nature in Greek thought:
 comparable with 'person'? 404, 414-22, 427-30, 437-43
 criteria considered: subjectivity 405-12; second-order psychological functions 414-22
 metaphysical or scientific approach combined with ethical 428-9, 431-41
 methodology of concepts 423-41
 objective-participant criteria of 421-2
 objectivist-participant methodology of 427-30, 437-41
 and personal responsibility 443-55
 'I':
 defined by what is 'reasonable' 179-81
 'I- (or 'self-)' 'other' contrast 335, 348, 354-5
 'I-part' contrast 120, 179-81, 184-90, 255
 'I-you' language 157 n. 220, 160, 163-4, 219
 as locus of self-consciousness and will 6, 11, 15, 31-2, 33-4, 40, 42, 44, 49, 59, 177-8, 185, 188, 190, 216, 255, 333, 365-6, 405-8, 410, 423-4, 428
 see also self-consciousness;
 subjective/subjectivity
 individualism, ethical 110-11, 125-9, 153, 210
 see also subjective-individualist;
 subjectivist-individualist
 individuality, as key modern idea 2, 9, 13, 109-11
 internal dialogue 15-16, 47, 56-7, 58-60, 182-3, 186-7, 217-221, 236, 252-9, 363 n. 202, 387, 458
 internalization of ethical judgements 75, 79-80, 88 n. 205, 92-3, 134, 269-70, 272 n. 102

- internalized other 67, 83-5, 207
 Inwood, B. 50, 367 n. 221
 Irwin, T. H. 19, 24-5, 242-4, 251 n. 35, 257 n. 60, 260-6, 270-1, 275-9, 283-4, 288, 301-2, 310, 323, 326-31, 338-40, 343-4, 346-7, 349, 356-60, 362-3, 365, 373, 384, 446-7, 449, 451, 464
- James, Henry 109 n. 43
 Jason (in *E. Med.*) 156-64, 170-2, 174
 Jauss, H. R. 99 n. 10
 justice (*dikaosune*) 302, 397
- Kahn, C. H. 57 n. 96, 330 n. 34, 334 n. 52, 336 n. 58, 379 n. 276
kakon ('bad'):
 in *E. Med.* 223-5
 in Homer 54 n. 83, 56-70, 78
kalon ('fine', 'beautiful'):
 in Aristotle 72-3, 249, 352
 in *Pl. Smp.* 322, 327, 384, 388
 Kant, I. 7-9, 37-41, 61, 68-9, 77-8, 82, 90, 110 n. 45, 127-8, 216, 246-7, 261-6, 277, 287, 336, 338-9, 349-50, 407, 419-20, 445-9, 458, 464-5
katharsis ('purgation', 'purification') in *Arist. Po.* 102 n. 21, 105 n. 33
kathekonta (Stoic 'appropriate acts') 75, 76 n. 155, 367
 Kenny, A. 336 n. 58, 372 n. 240, 373 n. 245
 Kidd, I. 367 n. 222
 Knox, B. M. W. 153-4, 156, 173 n. 284, 210
 Kosman, L. A. 327 n. 17
 Kovacs, D. 221-2, 222-3 n. 175
 Kraut, R. 330 nn. 34-5, 334 n. 52, 352 n. 137, 372 nn. 240-1, 373-4, 378-9, 382 n. 289, 383 n. 290
- Lear, J. 253-4 n. 44, 255 n. 52, 257 n. 60, 372, 436 n. 115
 Lesky, A. 31 n. 7
 Lévi-Strauss, C. 113
 life, practical *versus* contemplative 276, 301-7, 311-14, 342, 370-83, 390
 see also choice of lives
 Locke, J. 35, 42
 Long, A. A. 101 n. 16, 392 n. 335, 450-1 n. 173
- love:
 Christian 117 n. 70, 336-7
 Platonic 327, 332, 384-91
 Lowe, E. J. 405 n. 11
 Lucretius 396-7
 Lukes, S. 2 n. 6, 3 n. 7, 18 n. 49, 403, 456 nn. 197, 198
- McDowell, J. 73 n. 145, 150 n. 193, 431 n. 96, 432 n. 98
 MacIntyre, A. 7-9, 19, 25, 62-3, 68, 127-8, 286-7, 336 n. 59, 404, 427 n. 82, 429-31, 433-7, 440-3, 457, 462, 465, 466 n. 246, 467
 madness, language of 215, 253
 magnanimity (*megalopsuchia*) 75 n. 154, 317-18
 Marcus Aurelius 291 n. 185
 Martin, R. 130, 136-7, 144, 192 n. 56
 Mauss, M. 40 n. 35
 'mean' (*meson*) in Aristotle 71-3, 86
 means-end reasoning:
 in Aristotle 50, 53-5
 in Homer 54-5, 80-1
 Medea, *see* Euripides' *Medea*
 melancholy 318 n. 306
 Meleager 151, 193-4, 197, 200
 Menelaus (in Homer) 48, 78-80
menos ('impulse') 32
mentalité ('thought-world') 4 n. 11, 30, 468
 mistake-moral error distinction 82, 90
 Mitsis, P. 392, 396 nn. 355-6
 Moline, J. 251 n. 35, 252 n. 39
 monologue:
 deliberative: in Homer 29-93 esp. 46-9, 183-90; in *S. Ai.* 206-8
 deception-speech in *S. Ai.* 205-14
 and first-personal viewpoint 14-15, 122-3
 and individualism 210
 as internalized dialogue 59-60, 84-6, 183, 186-7, 205, 214
 as medium for dialogue 209-13, 217
 and self-consciousness 217
 moral luck 90-1, 101 n. 15
 Moravcsik, J. M. E. 384 n. 293
 Morton, A. 405 n. 12, 419
 motivation, psychological models of:
 in Aristotle 44-5, 50, 53-6
 based on beliefs and reasoning 43-6, 55-6, 47-51, 55-6, 60
 in Homer 45-7, 53-60

- T'-centred 31-3, 39
 Stoic 50-1, 56-8
 volitionist 34, 37
see also ethical motivation
 mother-child relationship, *see* reciprocity
- Nagel, T. 405, 407
 narrative focuses/focalizers 97 n. 7
 Nehamas, A. 103 n. 27, 110
nemesis ('indignation', 'disapproval') 78-9
 Nestor 192 n. 56, 193 n. 63
 Nietzsche, F. 9, 110-11, 116 n. 65, 126-7, 446, 458
 noble action:
 in Homer 83
 in *S. Ai.* 205, 208-9, 211-13
nomos-phusis ('ethics-nature') debate 410, 412
 Nussbaum, M. C. 91, 242, 278 n. 132, 285 n. 165, 298-9, 384 n. 294, 450-1 n. 173
- objective conception 7, 9-10, 32, 36, 60, 85, 92-3, 405, 421, 424, 428, 442
 objective-participant conception 10-16, 19, 59, 85-6, 92-3, 98, 102-5, 107 n. 40, 183, 226, 236, 239, 240-2, 279-89, 310-11, 315, 345-6, 367, 372, 414-15, 421-2, 427-30, 442-4, 455-66
 objectivist conception 7, 9-10, 93 n. 225, 105, 421, 442
 objectivist-individualist conception 19, 25 n. 62, 63, 242, 278-9, 310, 366-9, 407-9, 427, 446, 458, 464
 objectivist-participant conception 118-19 n. 75, 241, 283-4, 287, 310-11, 325, 346, 427-30, 449
- Odysseus:
 ancient responses to (*Hom. Od.* 20. 18-21) 184, 228
 Homeric deliberative monologues: (*Il.* 11. 404-10) 32, 38-9, 48, 61, 63, 69-78, 87-9; (*Od.* 20. 18-21) 183-90
 in *S. Ai.* 207 n. 111
 Oedipus (in Sophocles) 91, 106
 O'Neill, Eugene 122
 Ostenfeld, E. 442 n. 140
 other-benefiting virtue 262, 276, 279, 292, 301-2, 313-14, 288-9, 324-33, 340-55, 368-71, 373-5, 389-90, 394-5, 447
 and communication of truth 311-14, 342-3, 374-6, 378-9, 382, 390-1, 394-7, 440 n. 133, 460-1
- Padel, R. 32 n. 10, 97 n. 7
 Parfit, D. 337-9, 355, 357 n. 165, 358, 364, 386 n. 303, 424 n. 73
 Parry, A. 128-9, 140, 143
 participant conception of ethics 8-9, 64, 68-9, 71-2, 77-8, 85-6, 92-3, 104-5, 369, 424, 434, 462
 participant conception of second-order reasoning 279-80, 369
pathos ('emotion'):
 in *Arist. Po.* 101 n. 18, 104; *Rh.* 198-9
 in Galen 227-8, 231
 Stoic 227-32
pathos ('violent act') in *Arist. Po.* 100 n. 13
pathos-hamartema ('passion-mistake of judgement') distinction 229-30
 Patroclus (in Homer) 200-2
 Pericles' funeral speech 410-11
 person, as normative concept:
 comparable with Greek normative concepts, e.g. human nature? 404, 414-22, 427-30, 437-43
 criteria: subjectivity 403-12;
 second-order psychological functions 412-24
 defined by freedom of the will 445
 and human being, in modern philosophy 425-7
 methodology of concept 423-7, 441-3
 other 1 n. 3, 6-8, 11, 13, 15, 27-8, 34-6, 65, 186, 242, 286 n. 167, 336-7, 407
 as social interlocutor 15, 65
 specially linked with
 subjective-individualist approach 11, 13, 400, 404-5, 418-21
 status of 400-1, 403
 personal identity 6, 11, 13-14, 27-8, 44, 127, 337, 354-5, 362, 364, 368, 404-5, 428
 personality:
 distinction between individualist and participant conceptions 7-8, 37-41, 61-8

personality (*cont.*):
 distinction between
 objectivist-individualist and
 objectivist-participant conceptions
 277–84, 345–6, 427–8, 463–8
 distinction between participant and
 objective-participant conceptions
 284–7, 429–30, 465
 distinction between subjective and
 objective conceptions 6–7, 34–7,
 41–6
 distinction between
 subjective-individualist and
 objective-participant conceptions
 11–12, 418–22
 distinction between
 subjectivist-individualist and
 objectivist-individualist
 conceptions 107–10, 115–18,
 277–9, 406–8
 modern meaning of 1, 13, 35, 109,
 112
 status of categories 'subjective-
 individualist' etc. 8–14, 455–66
 studied across cultures 3–4, 456,
 468–9
see also categories used in this entry, e.g.
 subjective-individualist

persuasion:
 in Achilles' great speech 136–7,
 140–1, 144, 151
 intrapsychic 248–9, 252, 254, 256,
 297
 limits of, in Pl. R. 452
 linked with psychological language in
 Homer 191–5, 200

phantasia ('imagination', 'impression'):
 in Aristotle 50, 55 n. 88
 in Stoicism 51, 56, 227–8, 233

philia/philoi ('friendship/friends'):
 in Aristotle 322, 328–31, 346–63
 in Epicureanism 322, 331–2, 391–5
 in E. Med. 154, 161, 163–4, 165
 n. 254, 166–70, 174, 217–21
 in Homer 135, 146, 151–2, 157,
 194–5, 199–201
 in S. Ai. 207–15

Phoenix (in Homer) 148, 151, 192–4,
 199–200

phronesis ('practical wisdom',
 'reasonableness') in Aristotle 250,
 272, 361–2, 380
 and *sophia* ('theoretical wisdom') 380

phusis ('nature') 209
 see also nomos-phusis debate

Plato, *Republic*:
 ethico-emotional responses to poetic
 figures 99–105
 Homer's Achilles 103 n. 26, 315–20
 personal responsibility for virtue
 451–5
 philosopher-rulers' attitude to
 re-entering cave 287–8, 301–7
 pre- and post-reflective virtue
 292–300; compared with Greek
 poetic thinking 307–20
 psyche harmonized by reason's rule
 245–60; compared with Kant
 246–8; compared with Aristotle
 248–50
 significance of dialogue form 282–3
 n. 151, 312–13
 two-stage psycho-ethical education
 260–87; Irwin's interpretation of
 260–6, 275–9

Plato (other dialogues):
 Apology and *Crito*, Socrates as hero
 316–17
 Laws, ethical education and pleasure
 269 n. 97; and poetry 320 n. 316
 Phaedo, virtue as post-reflective
 291
 Phaedrus, love and intrapsychic
 relationships 386–8
 Symposium, ascent of desire
 (Diotima's mysteries) 291, 322,
 327, 384–7; 'exclusive'–'inclusive'
 interpretations of 327 n. 17, 384–5,
 387, 389; triangular relationship
 387–90
 Theaetetus, Protagorean relativism
 409–10

pleasure:
 in Epicureanism 331–2, 391–7
 in Pl. R. 296–7

Polkinghorne, J. 467 n. 250

Polydamas (in Homer) 83, 85, 115

Posidonius 227 n. 196, 231 n. 209

post-Cartesian thought 6, 7 n. 21, 10,
 34–7, 43, 58, 60, 69, 109, 127–9,
 185–6, 188, 405, 409–10, 419

post-Kantian thought 7–9, 10, 25,
 37–40, 69, 109, 127–9, 185–6,
 224–5, 277, 407–8, 419–20

practical syllogism 44, 50, 52–4, 56, 57
 n. 92

practices, ethical significance of 62–3,
 68, 71, 77–8

Priam (in Homer) 82

Price, A. W. 105 n. 34, 233 n. 219, 235
 n. 229, 296 n. 207, 346 n. 108, 350
 nn. 126, 128, 351 n. 129, 353 n. 143,
 354 n. 152, 355 n. 157, 362 n. 193,
 385–7

Prichard, H. A. 261 n. 73, 340 n. 76

prohairesis ('decision') in Aristotle
 55–6, 72–4, 103–4

Protagorean relativism 409–10

psuche ('life', 'soul', 'personality'),
 meanings of 43–4, 44 n. 45

psycho-ethical conflict:
 in E. Med. 216–26
 in Greek philosophy, *see akrasia*
 in Homer 183–90, 195–204
 in S. Ai. 213–16
 analysed in terms of competing
 belief-based desires and emotions
 179, 228, 231
 analysed in terms of rational will and
 passion 178, 228, 231
 produced by exemplary gesture 182,
 199–205, 213–18, 220, 226
 relationship between Greek poetic
 and philosophical models of
 178–82, 226–39, 376–8

psychological agency–passivity 91–2,
 97, 105, 117–18, 162 n. 241,
 190–204

psychological interplay (between parts
 or functions) 30, 32, 40, 42–4, 59,
 184–5, 227–8, 231, 245–6, 248–60,
 267–70, 295–7

psychological models (human):
 in Aristotle 43–5, 233–4, 247–50,
 361–2, 378–82
 in Chrysippus 227, 229–33
 in E. Med. 216–26
 in Galen 227–8
 in Greek poetry and philosophy 178–82
 in Homer 183–204
 in Plato 227, 234–5, 245–6, 249–60,
 268–70, 297, 387–8, 451–4
 in Socrates 233
 see also motivation, psychological
 models of; reason; psycho-ethical
 conflict

psychological unity, criteria of:
 non-Cartesian 59 n. 102, 227, 231,
 235, 248–50, 255, 267–9

post-Cartesian 30–4, 185–6, 188, 196,
 216

post-Kantian 40

Pucci, P. 218 n. 155, 221 n. 167

rational agent/being, key notion in
 Kantian and post-Kantian thought
 264–6, 276–7, 326, 328–30, 336,
 338–9, 368, 407, 446–8

rational (*logistikon*) part of psyche:
 in Aristotle 248–50, 321, 359, 361–2,
 380–2
 in Galen 227–8
 in Plato 245–6, 251–2, 253–4, 256,
 268–9, 297, 451–4

rationality, characteristic of adult
 humans 51–3, 55–6, 86, 366–7
 linked with language, sociability,
 theory 51–3, 56, 366–7, 406,
 414–15

Rawls, J. 339, 340 n. 74

reactive attitudes 15, 64–5, 67, 117, 152,
 170, 214

reason:
 co-operates with desires and emotions
 in virtuous psyche 71–4, 248–50,
 361–2
 different senses of 23, 179–80 n. 16,
 180, 228, 248, 252, 257, 296 n. 207,
 297, 361–2
 rules, desires, and emotions in
 virtuous psyche 245–7, 251–3,
 259–60, 268–71, 297, 361–2
 reasonable/unreasonable, as norm in
 Greek poetry and philosophy 157,
 179–81, 191, 193, 195, 199, 202–4,
 225, 343, 363–4, 371

reason–passion contrast 178, 181–2,
 196–8, 197 n. 74, 203–4, 216, 220,
 223–4, 461

reason-ruled psyche, *see* reason

reception-theory 4 n. 13, 17–18

reciprocity:
 in Aristotle 348–9, 351–2
 in E. Med. 158, 160, 165–7, 219–20
 in Epicureanism 393
 in Greek thought in general 5 n. 19,
 340–1
 in Homer 133–6, 139–41, 143–51,
 194–5, 199–201
 in Plato 303–4
 in S. Ai. 205–9

- reciprocity (*cont.*):
 and the mother-child relationship
 166-7, 347-8
- Redfield, J. 98, 107 n. 40, 113-15, 130
 n. 111, 141 n. 155
- Reeve, C. D. 251 n. 35
- Reeve, M. D. 145 n. 175
- responsibility:
 Kantian conception of 445-9
 non-Kantian conception of 85-6,
 90-2, 444, 449-50, 453-4
- results culture 33, 37, 40, 41 n. 36, 82
 n. 184
- reverence for the law (in Kant) 38, 64,
 246-7
- Richard III (in Shakespeare) 108-10
- Rickert, G. 160-1 n. 234
- Rorty, A. O. 2 n. 6, 15 n. 38, 105 n. 33,
 253-4 n. 44, 423 n. 72
- Ross, W. D. 247
- Rutherford, R. B. 96 n. 5
- Said, S. 30 n. 3, 66 n. 121, 162 n. 241
- Sarpedon (in Homer) 131-6, 148-9
- Sartre, J.-P. 9, 126, 127 n. 103, 420,
 445-7, 458
- Saunders, T. J. 411 n. 36
- scepticism, Greek 409-10
- Schadewaldt, W. 210 n. 124
- Schein, S. 161 n. 238
- Schelling, F. 126
- Schofield, M. 70, 76-7, 368 n. 230, 398
 n. 362
- Schütrumpf, E. 104 n. 29, 108 n. 41
- Seaford, R. 114 n. 59, 135 n. 134, 211
 n. 130
- second-order (reflective) reasoning:
 analysed in objective-individualist
 terms 262-3, 265-6, 275-9, 327-9
 analysed in objective-participant
 terms 279-87, 399, 421-2
 analysed in subjective-individualist
 terms 418-21
 criterion of person 413-14
 distinguished from first-order
 reasoning 133, 416
 in Greek philosophy 257-60, 262-3,
 265-6, 288-99, 304-7, 382-3,
 390-1, 394-5
 in Greek philosophy and poetry
 236-9, 244, 307-20, 376-7, 416-18
 and problematic hero 94-5, 106-7,
 117-19, 125, 131, 133, 148-52,
 158-62, 173, 177, 182, 204-5,
 210-14, 226, 233
- self/selfhood:
 linked with 'I'-centred model of mind
 31-2, 34-6, 60, 185-6, 196, 216
 linked with objective-individualist
 conception 277, 326-30, 332-4,
 338-40, 406-8
 linked with subjective and
 individualist conceptions 2-3,
 9-10, 13-14, 109-10, 126-8
 modern meanings of 1, 126-8
 studied across cultures 3-4
see also 'self'-compounds,
 subjective/subjectivity; personality
- self in dialogue 12, 14-16, 59, 124, 175,
 236, 252, 255-6, 363, 387-9, 399,
 449, 453-4, 458-9, 463
see also objective-participant
 conception; psychological interplay
- self-consciousness:
 as fundamental to personality 6,
 31-2, 34-7, 42-3, 332-3, 365-6,
 368, 405
 significance in Greek psychological
 thought 405-6
 non-Cartesian conception of 58-9,
 84-6, 182-3
- self-creation (in Nietzsche) 110-11,
 127-8, 446
- self-distancing 187-9, 218 n. 155, 200,
 220-1, 225-6
- self-division, *see* psycho-ethical conflict
- self-identification 187-9, 218 n. 155,
 220-1, 225-6, 377
- self-realization:
 and altruism 326-33, 338-40
 conceived in objective-individualist
 terms 278-9, 326-33, 345-6, 435,
 447
 conceived in subjective-individualist
 terms 110-11, 125-8, 258 n. 63,
 277-8
- semiotic criticism 3-4, 97 n. 7, 113
 n. 54, 123 n. 92
- Seneca 173 n. 283, 183 n. 26, 198 n. 76
- Shakespeare, William 108-12
- shame (*aidos*):
 in Greek philosophy 68 n. 126, 75
 n. 154
 in Homer 75-80, 83-4, 86-7, 151-2,
 194-5

- in modern thought 67
 in S. Ai. 207-8
- shame culture 74-5
- shame-guilt distinction 66-7
- shamelessness (*anaideia*) 158
- shared debate about human good
 283-4, 342-3, 356, 374, 385, 395
- shared life 164 n. 247, 324, 340, 347-8,
 351, 354-5, 374, 385, 392-3
- Sharples, R. W. 188
- Sherman, N. 264 n. 80, 351 n. 129, 353
 n. 143, 354 n. 152
- silencing considerations in ethics 73
 n. 145, 76 n. 158, 150 n. 193
- Silk, M. S. and Stern, J. P. 36 n. 21, 111
 n. 50, 116 n. 65
- Smith, P. 426-7
- Smith, P., and Jones, O. R. 37 n. 26,
 41-3
- Snell, B. 3, 30-41, 45-6, 49, 60-1,
 69-71, 77, 82-3, 90, 142, 177-8,
 185-6, 188-90, 196, 204, 216-17,
 223-5, 232
- Socrates 227, 233, 238 n. 243, 282-3,
 285, 286 n. 168, 312-13, 316-17,
 320 n. 316, 391 n. 329
- Solomon, R. 128
- sophron/sophronein* ('self-controlled/ be
 self-controlled'):
 in Aristotle 249-50
 in Epicureanism 396 n. 356
 in Pl. R. 253-4 n. 44, 271 n. 105,
 295-6
 in S. Ai. 212, 215
- Sorabji, R. 51 n. 70, 52 n. 73, 57 n. 92,
 229 n. 202, 296 n. 207, 413 n. 41,
 415 n. 46, 442 n. 140
- Stinton, T. C. 101 n. 19
- Stoicism:
 human motivation 50-2, 56-8
 magnanimity 318
 passions (*pathe*) and psycho-ethical
 conflict 227-36
 psychological models in Greek poetry
 102 n. 23, 229-33
 pre- and post-reflective virtue 290-1
 virtue as only good 75-7
- Strawson, P. F. 64-5, 117 n. 70, 118
 n. 72
- Striker, G. 369 n. 232
- structuralism 3-5, 95, 98, 107 n. 40,
 113-15, 121, 123
- subject 6, 34-7, 42, 127-8, 405-8
- subjective/subjectivity 6-7, 9-11, 35-6,
 42-4, 60, 279, 405-12, 428, 458
- subjective-individualist conception
 9-11, 13, 19, 98, 104, 109-11,
 115-16, 125-9, 278-9, 309-10,
 408-11, 420-1, 455-66
 fusion of post-Cartesian and
 post-Kantian thought 6-11, 34-41,
 126-91, 421
- subjectivist conception 6, 7 n. 21, 9-11
- subjectivist-individualist conception
 109-10, 227-9, 446
- sympathetic responses to literary
 figures, *see* emotions, and ethical
 responses to literary figures
- Taplin, O. 202-3 n. 94
- Taylor, C. 65, 111 n. 48, 128, 420, 445,
 446 n. 153, 466 n. 246
- Taylor, C. C. W. 404, 433 n. 102
- Taylor, G. 67 n. 125, 253-4 n. 44, 420
- Tecmessa (in S. Ai.) 205, 208-14
- therapeutic discourse 450
- thick/thin values 63, 74, 286
- Thrasymachus 451-3
- thumoeides* ('spirited') part of psyche in
 Pl. R. 245-6, 251, 254, 256, 268-9
- thumos* ('spirit') 32, 170, 181, 184-5,
 187-8, 191-203, 198 n. 75, 217, 222
 n. 174, 223-5
- 'tragic' characterization:
 in Homer 89-93
 late Romantic views of 108-13
 objective-participant account of
 115-24
 Plato and Aristotle on 99-107
 structuralist view of 113-15
- Trilling, L. 111 n. 48, 128
- Vernant, J.-P. 4 n. 11, 30 n. 3, 66 n. 121
- virtue:
 in Aristotle 71-3, 247-50, 272-5
 in Homer 62-3, 72-7
 in MacIntyre 62-3, 78
 in Plato 245-6, 259-60, 262-3
 in Stoicism 75-7
- virtue, pre- and post-reflective:
 interplay between, generates
 (psycho-) ethical conflict (in Greek
 poetry) 181-2, 195-200, 213-16,
 225-6; (in Greek philosophy)
 299-307, 376-8, 440; (in Greek

- virtue, pre- and post-reflective (*cont.*):
 poetry and Greek philosophy)
 236-9, 307-20, 376-8
 post-reflective essential for real virtue
 (Epicureanism) 393-7; (Pl. *Phd.*)
 291; (Pl. *Smp.*) 387-91; (Stoicism)
 398
 post-reflective reshapes pre-reflective
 (Aristotle) 290, 375-9, 382, 435-7;
 (Pl. *R.*) 295-7, 299-300, 432-5;
 (Stoicism) 291
 pre-reflective basis of post-reflective
 (Pl. *R.*) 267, 272-3, 279-83, 292-5,
 299-300, 451-5; (Aristotle) 273-4,
 289-90, 357-64; (Stoicism) 290,
 366-8, 398, 438-9
 relationship between Greek poetic
 and philosophical thought 307-20,
 415-22
 two patterns in Greek philosophy 23,
 288-9, 343-5, 438, 463
 virtue ethics 7 n. 23, 61 n. 106
 Vlastos, G. 283 n. 153, 327 n. 17,
 349-50 n. 125, 384 nn. 294-5, 385
 n. 297
 Voigt, C. 32 n. 11, 185-6, 188
 volitionist model of action 34, 37, 43, 46
 n. 54, 57 n. 96
 'we', as key ethical idea 342-3, 348,
 354-5
 White, N. P. 290 n. 183, 367 n. 224
 Whitman, C. H. 125-6, 140, 143, 152
 n. 203
 Wiggins, D. 14 n. 37, 234 n. 222, 425-6,
 429, 430 n. 90, 434, 437, 443, 465
 n. 241
 Wilkes, K. V. 6-7, 14 n. 37, 41-4, 56
 n. 89, 406, 423-4, 428, 442, 457
 will 34-40, 49, 66 n. 123, 108-9, 176
 Williams, B. 3 n. 8, 7-9, 19, 25, 46
 n. 54, 49, 63-7, 75, 78-80, 84, 90-2,
 110 n. 45, 242, 250 n. 31, 251 n. 33,
 265-6, 284-7, 298 n. 216, 337 n. 63,
 351 n. 130, 396 n. 353, 408-9 n. 25,
 424, 427 n. 82, 429-32, 435, 437-8,
 440-1, 448-9, 451-5, 457, 462, 465,
 467
 Williams, Tennessee 122
 Wilson, C. 128
 Winnington-Ingram, R. P. 210, 215
 nn. 144-5
 Wolff, E. 31, 35, 82-3, 90
 Wollheim, R. 405
 woman:
 Ajax as 'womanized' 211, 213
 Medea as 161
 Woods, M. 372 n. 240
 Wright, G. von 247
 Wright, M. R. 318 n. 308, 333 n. 46, 365
 n. 214, 365 n. 221, 368 n. 229
 Yamagata, N. 70 n. 132
 Zeno 398
 Zürcher, W. 155 n. 212